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THREE MONTHS' RESIDENCE AT NABLUS,

AND AN ACCOUNT OF

THE MODERN SAMARITANS.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WOODFALL AND KINDER
MILFORD LANE, STRAND, W.C.

THREE MONTHS' RESIDENCE

NABLUS,

AND AN ACCOUNT OF

THE MODERN SAMARITANS.

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By Rev. JOHN MILLS, F.R.G.S., M.R.A.S.,

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LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1864.

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TO

JOHN LEE, ESQ., LL.D., F.R.S., F.R.G.S., F.S.A., Q.C.,

ETC. ETC.,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ASTRONOMICAL SOCIETY,

The following Work

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

AS AN EXPRESSION OF ADMIRATION FOR HIS VARIED LEARNING,

OF ESTEEM FOR THE SERVICES HE HAS RENDERED

TO THE SCIENTIFIC AND SOCIAL INTERESTS OF THE COUNTRY,

AND

OF GRATITUDE FOR HIS KIND FRIENDSHIP FOR

HIS HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE Samaritans, as Dean Stanley justly remarks, are "the oldest and smallest sect in the world," and, I may also add, perhaps the most interesting. Having inhabited Nablus, where they now dwell, since the time of Nehemiah, and having perpetuated their ancient customs and sentiments, the life of such a people cannot but be of importance, especially to the Bible student., An increasing interest in them has been felt by learned men in Europe since the time of Scaliger, and a correspondence of small extent, and at distant periods, was opened with them by certain Europeans.*

Several eminent travellers have given brief notices of the Samaritans,† but no full account of them, so far as I am aware, has ever been attempted. With the view

* These letters have been compiled and edited by M. De Sacy, and published in Vol. XII. "Bibliothéque du Roi," Paris, 1831.

† Robinson, in his "Biblical Researches in Palestine" (3 vols., London, 1847); Wilson, in the "Lands of the Bible" (2 vols., London, 1847); Bowring, in his tract on "Samaria and the Samaritans" (London, 1837); Shelaby, in his "Notices of Modern Samaritans" (London, 1855); Miss Beaufort's "Egyptian Sepulchres and Syrian Shrines" (2 vols., London, 1862); Stanley on the "Samaritan Passover," in a note to "Sermons in the East" (London, 1863); Grove, in a notice on "Nablus and the Samaritans" in "Vacation Tourists" (London, 1861); and Abbé Barges' "Les Samaritains de Naplouse" (Paris, 1855).

of endeavouring to supply this *desideratum*, I visited them on two different occasions—once in 1855, and again in 1860—remaining with them some months. During this time I had daily intercourse with Amram, the priest, and he is my sole authority for all the important facts I have given concerning his people. In eliciting information from him, I made Jewish life my stand-point, so as to be able to compare the Samaritans and Jews, to know in what they agreed and in what they differed, and it is for the reader to judge how far I have succeeded. I have purposely refrained from advancing any of my own speculations, or of making any comments, but have confined myself to merely recording as faithfully as I could just what I saw and heard.

The first Part, being a brief survey of the neighbourhood, and an account of the other inhabitants of Nablus, will, I trust, be not less acceptable to the reader.

Yohannah El Karey, a young Arab, and a native of Nablus, whom I first met at Jerusalem and there engaged to read Arabic with me, accompanied me to his native place, and rendered me great assistance; which I am glad to acknowledge here.

For fuller information on sundry Jewish points, I must refer the reader to my "British Jews."

40, *Lonsdale Square, London,*
8th November, 1864.

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NABLUS

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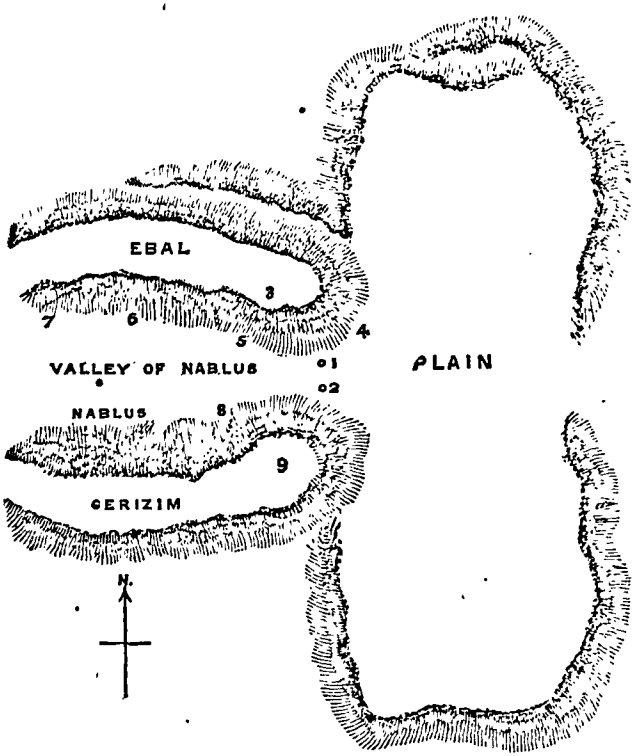
CHAPTER I.

A GENERAL VIEW OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THE neighbourhood of Nablus, or Shechem, is one of the most interesting and important spots mentioned in the early history of the Holy Land. There is every reason to believe that venerable and sacred associations have clustered around it from the earliest period. In all probability, Gerizim had been a consecrated mount, and had witnessed the performance of sacrifice and religious rites, ages before Abraham and his grandson Jacob erected there their altars to Jehovah. Nor is it unlikely that Ebal also had witnessed similar solemnities. And in the early history of the Israelites, as we shall subsequently see, Shechem became the capital of the conquerors, and exercised no small influence over the destinies of the nation.

The great natural features of the neighbourhood are the two mountains Gerizim and Ebal, standing erect

like two giants, as if in defiance of each other, with the little valley running between them; and on the eastern side the extensive and noble plain, stretching from north to south.



1. Joseph's tomb.
2. Jacob's well.
3. Ruins on Mount Ebal.
4. Askar.
5. Ancient tomb.
6. Sit es Salamiyah.
7. Imad ed Din.
8. Amud.
9. Samaritan sacred places.

We shall, first of all, take a general survey of the two mountains.

It is difficult to determine the origin of the names of

these mountains. Of Gerizim,* the most probable is the one proposed by Gesenius, who derives it from the name of an ancient tribe—the Gerzi or Gerzites, who, it seems, had encamped here. The name of this people is only once mentioned in history, and then in conjunction with the Geshurites and Amalekites, where it is said that those nations were of old the inhabitants of the land (1 Sam. xxvii. 8); referring, however, in this instance, not to the neighbourhood of Mount Gerizim, but to the south of Palestine, "as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt." If this derivation is correct, Gerizim would mean "the hill of the Gerizites." There is an instance of a similar derivation in another neighbourhood. In Genesis x. 18, the Zemarites are named as a Canaanitish tribe, but their name does but once reappear in history, and then only in a local name —the Mount Zemarain, with a city of the same name thereon (2 Chron. xiii. 4; Josh. xviii. 22).

The name of Ebal† is, perhaps, still more uncertain. The derivation given to it by Gesenius, עיבל, *void of leaves*, has no foundation. Amram, the Samaritan priest—of whom more anon—derived it from אבל, *to*

* The natives call it Et-Tur. This name was given to it from early times. The earliest author that mentions this name is, I believe, El-Masudi, in his "Meadows of Gold and Mines of Gems," written about the beginning of the tenth century. He tells us that the mountain was so called by the Samaritans themselves. This, however, would seem to be a mistake, as the name is not included in the Samaritan list of names of the mountain. De Sacy, quoting this passage from a different manuscript, has it Tur-berik (vid. Chrestomathie Arabe, tom. ii. pp. 342, 343).

† The names by which the natives call this part of the mountain are *Sit es Salamiyah*, and *Imad ed Din*, from the tombs of two Mohammedan saints hereinafter noticed.

mourn, from the fact that the slopes of this mountain have been the burial-places of the inhabitants of these parts from the remotest ages. This derivation involves the anomaly of exchanging Aleph and Ain; but similar anomalies being known to the Semitic languages, we may, perhaps, accept it—at all events, until some other more tenable be suggested. It may be, after all, that the names of both mountains belong to a language far anterior to the period of the Israelitish conquest—the language of some aboriginal tribe now lost to history.

The height of these mountains, compared with that of the mountain-chain to which they belong, is not remarkably great. They both reach an elevation of about 2500 feet above the level of the Mediterranean. But the towns of Saphet, in the north, and Hebron, in the south of Palestine, stand at no less an elevation than 2800 feet; while the two extremities of the chain —Mount Hermon in the north, and the heights of Sinai in the south—tower up to about an elevation of from 10,000 to 11,000 feet. In relation, however, to the immediate neighbourhood and the surrounding district, Mounts Gerizim and Ebal appear to great advantage. At their eastern abutments, the extensive and noble plain stretches from north to south, whilst the mountains themselves run in parallel ranges from east to west, having the little valley of Shechem lying between. This valley has an elevation of about 1700 feet above the Mediterranean, and the mountains themselves tower up some 800 feet higher still, attaining the aforesaid elevation of 2500 feet. The sight of both,

lifting up their gigantic heads as twin lords of the mountains of Ephraim, is very striking; and the view from their summits, extending from the high range beyond the Jordan on the east, to the blue waves of the Mediterranean on the west, is truly magnificent.

It has been the general opinion from a very early date, that the two mountains differ essentially in their appearance and fertility, Gerizim having by far the preference. Some of the early travellers, such as Benjamin of Tudela,* have confirmed this opinion. Maundrell,† however, with his usual good sense and discrimination, states that neither had much to boast of; and other modern travellers have endorsed his opinion, which is, upon the whole, undoubtedly correct. From the town (Nablus) to the eastern opening of the valley —a distance of about a mile and a half—where the two mountain ranges have their starting points, which are, strictly speaking, the Mounts Gerizim and Ebal, both mountains rise immediately from the valley in steep and mostly precipitous declivities to the height, as already said, of 800 feet; and both, as seen from the valley, are equally naked and sterile. But immediately behind the city, and there only, Gerizim has the advantage, owing to a copious stream that flows through a small ravine at the west side of the town. Here are orchards and gardens, full of life and vegetation. On Ebal also, opposite the town, there are several gardens and cultivated plots; some are old, but the majority are of late planting, and all are in a comparatively

* Travels, A.D. 1160-1173. † Travels, A.D. 1697.

thriving condition. They can never, however, equal those on the Gerizim side, on account of a deficiency of water. Nor do the tops of the two mountains present any very essential differences. All the difference that does exist is decidedly in favour of Ebal. Both are cultivated to some extent, and bear crops of grain, as well as affording pasturage for flocks of goats; both, however, are bare of trees. On Ebal, beyond the highest ridge in front of the town, is a considerable space, well cultivated, comprising several fine fields of grain and some good vineyards. On its northern side, and on its eastern brow also, it appeared much superior to any part of Gerizim, so far as I could judge. The northern slopes, with the adjoining undulating plain, have a remarkably fine appearance. The whole district is dotted with vineyards, olive-groves, cornfields, and all the pleasing variety of a careful cultivation. In fact, it is one of the richest and most delightful scenes in the whole country.

I may as well, perhaps, add here, that both hills are infested with jackals, which frequently strike up nocturnal concerts, those of one hill answering those of the other, and vieing with each other in their antiphonal but hideous music. I was told by the natives that Ebal was not unfrequently visited by hyænas and other beasts of prey, especially bears. None of these did I have the satisfaction of seeing. One day, however, whilst traversing the summit, two beautiful gazelles sprang up before us; and about half an hour afterwards,

whilst my eyes were intently fixed upon a curious circle of stones, as I was walking towards it, I trod upon a poor timid hare, which bounded off before I had a moment's time to console it. These were the only animals seen by me upon this mountain.

Before closing these remarks on Mount Ebal, I will add a brief account of the remains I there met with, in the course of several visits made during my stay in the neighbourhood; and I feel the more interest in so doing, inasmuch as no modern traveller, so far as I am aware, has visited it, with the exception of the late Mr. Bartlett, who made one hasty scramble up its side.

About midway to the summit, fronting the city, stands the only edifice now remaining on Mount Ebal; this is called "Imad ed Din"—the pillar of religion. According to the current tradition this "Imad ed Din" was built over the tomb of a Mohammedan saint of the same name (the building, of course, receiving its name from the saint), who flourished some 500 years ago. Since then the mountain itself, especially the side upon which the building stands, has been commonly called by that name. The building is used as a mosque; but some of the native Christians told me that originally it was a Christian church. It consists of two apartments. The first, comprising the southern end of the building, measures twenty-four feet long by twenty-one feet wide, and is surmounted by a dome. The floor was partly paved with fragments of very

beautiful mosaic work, wrought in marble of red, blue, and white. Some were of a circular form, measuring three feet in diameter, and others were square, of a somewhat similar size. The second, or inner room, occupying the northern end, has a length of twenty-four feet, and is ten and a half feet in breadth. The floor here was covered with a filthy straw matting, and in the middle was a large wooden lamp-stand, made in imitation of a tree with a goodly number of branches. On these a number of lamps were hanging, together with a formidable array of filthy rags, placed there by pilgrims in honour of the saint, whose tomb, they say, is in the northern wall, indicated by a marble slab placed against it. In the front of the building, on the north-western side, is a court, measuring some forty feet square. In the north-western corner of this court is a small and dirty out-building of modern date. Into this, I was informed, the Mohammedans go when making a covenant with the dead saint regarding any object they may have in view, promising if he grant them success, that they will in return make a feast to his honour. Near this, and within the court, is a well hewn out of the rock, measuring eighteen feet square and about eighteen feet deep, with a flight of ten steps leading down into it under a pointed arch.

Clambering up from this building until we reached the top of the first ridge, we came to an immense number of loose stones, which might

lead the traveller, at first sight, to conclude that they must be the ruins of former buildings; but upon closer examination he finds that there is no evidence to support such a conclusion. Continuing our course eastward, and reaching the highest ridge fronting the town, we find that the summit forms a kind of circular mound enclosed by a wall of loose stones. From a distance it appears like the remains of a strong tower—and when approaching it for the first time, I had great hopes that it would prove to be something of the kind; but, to my great disappointment, I found that it was only the enclosure of a very poor vineyard. Still, from the configuration of the place, as well as from the vast number of stones fit for building, I cannot but think that some massive structure must have stood here in former ages. Dr. Olin states, in his Travels, that he saw, or imagined he saw, from Gerizim, the appearance of ruins on Ebal, nearly opposite Nablus, but was unable to satisfy himself by a nearer examination. I have no doubt he saw what I am now speaking of, and very naturally supposed it to be ruins.

Crossing these vineyards, with their shrubs and wild flowers, which made every step we took redolent with sweet odours, we came to a table-land on the north-east, where there are several excellent vineyards and well-tilled plots of ground. Here I stumbled upon what appeared to me to be the remains of an ancient road. It ran from this spot, in a northerly direction, towards the summit of the mountain. I fully intended to examine

it carefully before leaving the neighbourhood, but failed to do so. I am persuaded, however, that there was anciently a road here, and, I should conclude, superior to anything now found in the country. It struck me at the time, from its apparent breadth and regularity, that on careful examination it might prove to be the remains of a Roman road, Palestine never having had good roads excepting the few constructed by the Romans.

On various parts of the table-land at the top of the mountain are several circular enclosures of loose stones, some standing, in a tolerable state of preservation, whilst others are partly demolished, with the stones scattered all around. Some of these stones have all the appearance of having been selected, if not prepared, for certain parts of the building; but I could not fully satisfy myself whether or not I could trace on them the marks of hammer and chisel. One of these enclosures measured 210 feet in diameter, and some others are of similar dimensions. The question then presented itself, what could these be? Were they the remains of any ancient constructions? In reply it struck me forcibly at the time, that most likely they belonged to the aborigines, or perhaps to the Israelitish conquerors of the time of Joshua. And here it is worthy of observation that the Hebrew word חָצֵר (*chatser*), generally rendered court or village, means in its topographical sense a village exactly corresponding to what these might have been—namely, a stone wall having tent-cloth drawn over it. It would be just the kind of village suitable for a people during their transition

state from a nomadic to a settled life. Many such villages are mentioned, especially in the early history of the country; such, for example, as Hazar-adar in the extreme south (Num. xxxiv. 4), and Hazar-enan in the extreme north (Num. xxxiv. 9), and in all probability, these on Mount Ebal were of the same class.*

On the highest point, exactly fronting the temple-spot on Mount Gerizim, are the remains of another enclosure, different from these. This is a square, measuring 108 feet on every side, built mostly of large stones. The south-eastern and south-western corners are in a better state of preservation than the others. I could not altogether satisfy myself, in this case also, whether or not tools had been used in its erection. The space inside was entirely covered with luxuriant grass, with the exception of one spot, a little to the south of the centre—a circle of about a yard in diameter, which was perfectly bare. Some 300 feet east of this enclosure, we discovered an old cistern, measuring two yards and a half in diameter, but filled up with loose stones. A little farther down, still eastward, we found another cistern, in a better condition. This was hewn out of the rock, and of a circular form. Its mouth measured two feet three inches in diameter; but, inside, it measured some eighteen feet in diameter. The bottom was covered with loose stones and rubbish;

* The Yezidï, a Kurdish family not far from Aleppo, construct their houses at present in the same fashion. They build a stone wall some five feet high, and by means of long strips of goat-hair cloth sewn together, and raised high by long poles of wood, the roof is formed, which is impervious both to the rays of the sun and to rain.

to what depth we could form no idea. Its present depth is about ten feet. About eighteen feet to the west of this well we saw what appeared to be some kind of building, but covered to a level with the ground with loose stones and earth. We removed enough to discover what it was, and found it to be a piece of masonry, forming a flight of steps leading down to some subterranean place, most likely to the adjoining cistern. The three upper steps were in a comparatively good state of preservation, but lower down we could not penetrate, as we were not provided with any implements for digging.

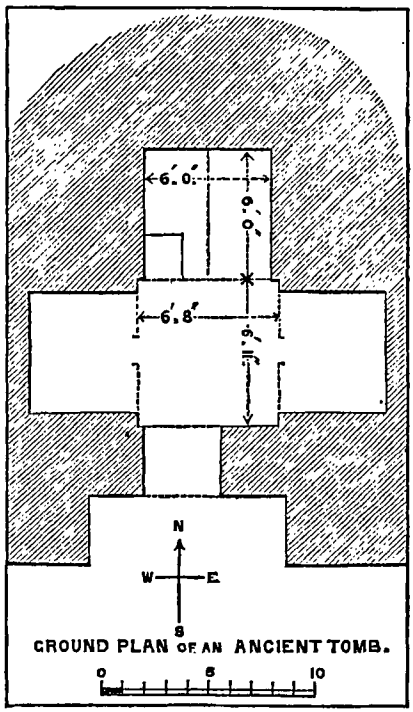
Below this, but close by, we found unmistakable evidences of a former dwelling. There were no important ruins, nor could we trace any form of building; but the spot was strewn over with fragments of pottery and tessellated stones.

Some 600 feet further down the side of the mountain we found another circular enclosure of loose stones, measuring from sixty to seventy feet in diameter, but the wall much smaller than those on the summit. On its northern side was a ridge of rock, and, on examination, we found there an ancient tomb. The entrance was completely blocked up with loose stones. We removed enough to make a partial examination. Both ante-chamber and tomb were hewn out of the rock. The former was a square of nine feet, and the top was worked into a pointed arch. The tomb itself, so far as we could discern, was similar to those near the foot of the mountain, which we shall presently notice.

When we sat and reflected upon the historical connections of Mount Ebal, it forcibly occurred to us that perhaps we had just beheld some of the most sacred spots in the history of the Israelitish conquerors. If, according to the Hebrew text, Joshua built an altar on Ebal, then there is no spot in its whole range more favourable to its erection than that within the square enclosure which we have just described. The spot within it, so bare of all vegetation, might have been so rendered from observances connected with the sacrificial duties, such as the use of salt; and the cisterns and the dwelling close by, as well as the tomb, might have belonged to the priest's family. This, of course, is only bare supposition.

Along the base of the mountain we found a goodly number of tombs hewn out of the rock, much after the same style as those about Jerusalem, especially those on the Hill of Evil Counsel. These tombs extend from the south-eastern corner of Ebal westward beyond the city. To describe them all would be tedious and useless. A brief account of one must suffice, and will serve as an example of the rest, with this proviso, that the one under notice was the largest that I met with in good preservation. It is one of three tombs belonging to the same ante-chamber. This ante-chamber is hewn out of the rock, but open towards the south and to the sky. It measures thirty-one feet and three inches in length, twenty-three feet and six inches in width, and from nine to twelve feet in depth. The entrance into the tomb is five feet and ten inches high, five feet and

six inches wide, and three feet and six inches deep. There had been double doors to it, hewn out of the rock itself, and of similar character with those in the tombs of the kings at Jerusalem, so often described by



travellers. The doors themselves were not to be found, but the holes wherein the pivots turned were easily distinguished. Having entered, we found the sepulchral chamber to be a square room, measuring six feet eight inches from east to west, and six feet eleven inches from north to south, with a flat ceiling. On the three sides

were niches for the dead. The one on the northern side, opposite the entrance, was of a square form, with an arched roof, and divided by a groove in the floor into two compartments. On the other two sides there were similar recesses, but a little smaller in size, and without a groove in the floor.

This ante-chamber, with its suite of tombs, evidently belonged to an early period in the history of the country, and might have been originally the property of one of the leading families of Israel. But I may here remark that Amram, the Samaritan priest, told me that the oldest Samaritan burial-ground was in this locality, and the one under notice might have belonged to that people. I have only to add on this subject, that we found tombs apparently much older than any in this locality a little to the west of the city, on the slopes of Mount Ebal.

Before we leave this mountain there remains one other spot to be visited. It is a little past the south-eastern corner, close to the village called Askar. When passing this place one day, and noticing that a copious stream of water ran down past it, we traced its course until we found that it issued out of an artificial cave, which ran some distance into the mountain. To the north of the cave, but close by, there was a huge block of stone, upon which we at once saw evident traces of art. The *tout ensemble* appeared as if it had been prepared for a seat—a kind of rude throne fronting the east. Clambering to the top, we found that two shelves or steps had been chiselled

out of it. The upper one stood about forty inches from the summit of the stone, and measured about fifteen feet in length. The lower one stood about twelve inches below this. A yard and a half lower down was a platform of six feet square, hewn out of the stone. Behind this was a hole chiselled out, about three feet deep, and a little more than three feet in diameter at the surface, but gradually narrowing, until at the bottom it only measured twelve inches. What could have been the object of this vast block of rude art we could form no conjecture.

The entrance into the cave, judging from its present appearance, had been richly adorned with a variety of sculptures, though only a few traces, and those imperfect, are now remaining. The cave itself is hewn out of the rock, and is seven feet deep and three feet wide. Along the centre of its floor an artificial trough is sunk, one foot wide and six inches deep, in which the stream flows. This trough, as well as the cave in general, is worked with great care. Having proceeded some sixty feet up the cave in a westerly direction, the trough ceased, and the water flowed over the whole floor. Wading along we found the water to be intensely cold. Some seventy-five feet farther brought us to a pointed arch in front of a grotto, which had thousands of bats clustering on its roof. On our left were two other grottoes, the three forming a kind of triangle—north, south, and west. The one on the south had an arched entrance, but not pointed. The one on the west had no arch, and its floor was strewn

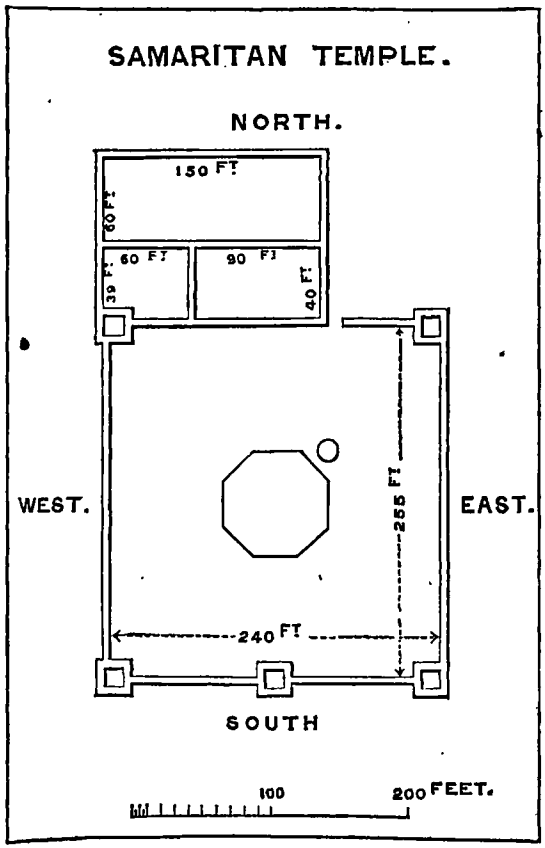
over with large blocks of stone, evidently hewn out of the place. It was out of this grotto the stream issued. We had now reached the end of the cave.

I ought to have observed that the stream did not discharge itself from the mouth of the cave, but was made to flow through a cavity on the southern side near the mouth into another small cave, whence it issued into a large square open reservoir hewn out of the platform rock nearly in front of the cave.*

We shall now cross the valley and visit the remains that still exist on Mount Gerizim. There are two roads, or rather paths, leading up—one direct from Nablus, the other from the valley, nearly a mile to the east of the city. The easier one, and that which the inhabitants have been accustomed to use from the earliest ages, is the former. It leads through a small ravine behind the city on the west, past several luxuriant gardens, and a copious stream of excellent water, the principal supply of the city. About midway to the top of the mountain the path divides into two—the one on the right hand leading to neighbouring villages, and that on the left leading to the top of the mountain. Fifteen or twenty minutes of not very hard climbing will bring us to the first ridge, and another quarter of an hour will bring us to the highest and eastern platform. This is the site of all that is

* This is called by the inhabitants, after the name of their hamlet, *Ain Askar*, and is large enough to supply a population of thirty thousand at least. It is used, to some small extent, to irrigate the plain.

really interesting on Mount Gerizim. This part of the hill is strewn all over with the remains of former buildings, a full description of which would require



more space than we can now devote to it. We shall, therefore, confine ourselves to a brief survey of the principal objects.

1. On our right hand, as we approach the principal

ruins, is the place where the Samaritans perform the Pascal and other ceremonies. This spot we shall describe more fully when we come to speak of the Passover.

2. Leaving a vast amount of ruins on our left hand, we come to the principal remains. They consist mostly of an enclosure nearly square, measuring about 240 feet from east to west, and about 254 feet from north to south. At the four corners are square projections of different dimensions, varying from sixty-five to seventy-five feet in extent. These formerly formed square rooms or towers. In the middle of the southern wall is a similar one. The entrance into the enclosure is in the middle of the northern wall, and measures about seventeen feet in width. Near the centre of the square is an octagonal building, having its doorway on the northern side; and close by, on its north-eastern side, are the ruins of what must once have been a most beautiful cistern. The present remains of the walls of the enclosure vary in their measurement from five to fifteen feet in height, and from five to six feet in thickness. The stones are of moderate size. I measured several, and the largest I met with were about four feet nine inches long and two feet four inches deep; they are all well cut and bevelled, as it is generally termed, in the Phœnician and Jewish style. The eastern wall is built upon the crest of the mountain, overlooking the noble plain beneath.

On the north-western side, and joined to the enclosure,

are walls, manifestly of similar date and character. They form a square of about 150 feet on each side, and are divided into three compartments—two small, and one large. The smallest of these, adjoining the north-western corner of the large enclosure, measures about sixty feet from east to west, and about thirty-nine feet from north to south. This has been used for a Mohammedan cemetery. Attached to this, on its eastern side, is the second compartment, measuring about ninety feet from east to west, and about forty-nine feet from north to south. Both these enclosures are several feet lower than the main enclosure. To the north of these, and from fifteen to twenty feet still lower, is the third compartment, occupying the remainder of the 150 feet square.

From the entrance into the chief enclosure, the remains of another wall appear, running obliquely to the north-east, and, at a distance of 150 feet, there appears to have been a large room on the right-hand side, and a smaller one on the left; now both in shapeless ruins.

The square room in the north-eastern corner of the main enclosure is now used as a mosque. It is surmounted by a cupola of modern construction, and, according to the Mussulman tradition, covers the remains of Sheech Ghranem.

Such are the outlines* of these ruins, once the mag-

* For further account I must refer my readers to "Murray's Handbook of Syria;" and Dr. Robinson, who believes these remains to be the ruins of a Roman fortress; and to M. De Saulcy, who has given a more minute but fanciful description, together with a

nificent temple of the Samaritans, and occupying the most imposing site in the whole of Palestine.*

3. On the south-western side of this main enclosure, and at a distance of some 240 feet from it, is a platform of rock of rather a smooth surface, but irregular in its outline. It has an inclination to the north-east; and measures forty-eight feet from east to west, and thirty-six feet from north to south. Near the southern extremity there is a hollow in the surface, measuring fifteen inches by thirteen. At the north-western end there is a kind of cistern hewn out of the rock. This cistern appears to have been a very large work, but is now filled with rubbish within six feet or less of the top. It is covered with a very primitive kind of masonry. The orifice, which measures nine feet in length, is made of two moderately large unhewn stones, placed so as to form a kind of arch, with a small one between them as a lock. Two other stones are added to strengthen the work. The whole is strongly but roughly finished, and has all the appearance of an ancient work. With the exception of the cistern, the whole place we are now viewing is in its natural condition; there are no traces of art, no evidence of man's device.

groundplan, but not a very accurate one. Mr. Thomson, in his "Land and the Book," has given a more correct groundplan.

* On my first visit, in 1855, by the assistance of my Samaritan guide, I was able get up to the top of the mosque, and obtained thence a most glorious view, extending from the trans-Jordanic mountains on the east to the Mediterranean on the west, upon the blue bosom of which I could distinctly see the white canvas of some vessel. The view was much grander than even that from Mount Tabor.

According to the Samaritan tradition, this rocky surface is the sacred shrine of Mount Gerizim from the remotest ages. It was here that Abraham prepared to sacrifice his son Isaac. This was the Bethel of Jacob, where the heavenly messengers held communion with the patriarch. Amram, the Samaritan priest, accompanied me on my first visit to the spot, and, on our approaching the place, he took off his shoes, because, he said, it was holy ground. He informed me that the surface of the rock was the ancient sanctuary of the Most High; and that the hollow on the southern side was the Holy of Holies. There is no improbability in supposing that the spot has been the sanctuary of Gerizim from the earliest period; the rock being the altar upon which the sacrifices were slain and burnt, and the cistern the receptacle of the blood, entrails, &c.; but what particular service had the hollow—Amram's Holy of Holies—I cannot conceive.

I may here add, that on the north-eastern side of the principal enclosure, I noticed an opening, apparently into the earth, but I found it to be a trough, running underneath the enclosure, in the direction of the rock and cistern just mentioned, and emptying itself down the eastern brow of the mountain. It might have had communication with this very place; and certainly had with some place in that direction. It measured twenty-two inches in depth, and twenty inches in width, and was worked with burnt brick, well cemented inside. It bore the same character as the one that communicates between the Pools of Solomon and the Temple area.

I have only to add, that originally the Hebrews, like the Druids and other ancient nations, performed their religious ceremonies in the open air; and I noticed more than one similar surface on Mount Ebal —but without a cistern attached to them—upon which, in all probability, similar rites were wont to be performed.

4. Close to the western side of the main enclosure, and running parallel to it, is a line of rocky slabs, called by the Samaritans *Aasher Belatat*, the ten stones; it appeared to me to be only a large rocky platform, divided by natural fissures. The Samaritan tradition, however, asserts that the twelve stones put up by Joshua at Gilgal (Josh. iv. 19–24), were removed from Gilgal, and placed under these huge blocks, and that they remain here to this day. But it is also said that the stones under this altar are written upon. There is no evidence that Joshua wrote at all upon the stones set up at Gilgal, but only on the stones set up, according to the Hebrew text, in Mount Ebal (Deut. xxvii. 1–8), which we shall notice anon. Which of these were removed, according to the Samaritan tradition, to Mount Gerizim, is a problem. The tradition is undoubtedly ancient, and referred to by early travellers. Benjamin of Tudela, for example, tells us that in his time (A.D. 1162), the tradition was, that the platform now referred to was an altar built with the Gilgal stones. To me, as to most if not to all modern travellers who have noticed it, the character of the platform appeared doubtful. I could not satisfy myself whether it was formed of detached

stones placed together, or was one rocky platform, having fissures on its surface. Nor could I see the reason why it is called the *ten stones*, as there were evidently twelve, or rather, thirteen; unless out of regard to the *ten* tribes that formed the kingdom of Israel. I have visited the place repeatedly, and, on one occasion, in company with the Samaritan priest: on expressing my doubts with regard to their tradition, he expressed a perfect willingness to bring it to a test. The thought of discovering the stones of Gilgal, or those written upon by Joshua, was truly electrifying; and I determined upon excavating before leaving the neighbourhood. Knowing the cupidity of the local government, and the fanaticism of the people generally, I had to carry out my plan as quietly as possible, and on the 26th of March, 1860, I partly accomplished my object. I hired three Arabs, and, together with my Arab friend Yohannah, we all set to. The Arabs, as usual, sincerely believed that I was seeking for some hidden treasure, nor would they be persuaded otherwise, but halted continually at their work until I had promised them a full share of the spoil, and a certain sum of *backsheesh*, should we fail to find anything. We commenced at the middle stone, and having uncovered the immediate earth, I found, to my great satisfaction, that they were really separate blocks of stone, and not one rocky platform. But next came disappointment: the stones were so heavy that we could not turn them over without the aid of mechanical power, which we, unfortunately, did not possess. I examined the blocks as carefully as the circumstances

would admit of, but could find no traces of any kind of writing. The stones, however, were not sufficiently uncovered to enable me to satisfy myself that there was no writing on them. It is not impossible that the Gilgal stones are here, or even the ones written upon by Joshua. I hope, some day, to be more fortunate in the attempt to test the tradition.

As a conclusion to our brief survey of the antiquities of Gerizim, I may add that the earth, all around the spot where the temple stood, is strewn with the ruins of former buildings. I picked up fragments of old pottery, and I noticed several old cisterns here and there, some very large, but all in ruins, and mostly hidden from sight.

I have already mentioned the valley between the two mountains—the valley of Shechem. It runs from east to west, and extends from the eastern abutments of the two mountains for several miles to the west. A portion of it only belongs to our present notice, namely, from its eastern opening to the city of Nablus, a distance of about a mile and a half.

At its very commencement, on either side, are the two most interesting monuments of the neighbourhood, Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb; the former near the foot of Gerizim, and the latter near the foot of Ebal, as if keeping guard over the parcel of field bought by the patriarch of the children of Hamor. These we shall again visit. A little farther on, and near the centre of the valley, stands a small village, of which we shall have something yet to say. About half-way from

the entrance of the valley to the town of Nablus, we come to the place where the two mountains approach nearest to one another. Here the breadth of the valley is about a quarter of a mile, or a little more. Here also is the highest ground; and it forms the watershed between the valley of the Jordan on the one hand, and the Mediterranean Sea on the other. The valley thus far is, at present, comparatively bare of all kinds of trees; but I was told that, in former years, there were numerous trees of various kinds studding the valley. As we proceed towards the city, the mountains again recede, and the valley widens to about half a mile or more. It is hardly in any part a flat level, but is a gradual slope of the two mountains until they dovetail into each other. The part nearest the city is well wooded from side to side. The olive, as in the days when Jotham delivered his famous parable, is the principal tree. Some of these have the appearance of extreme age, far older than any in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. The town itself is surrounded by orchards and gardens, where figs, mulberries, grapes, almonds, oranges, apricots, and other fruit luxuriate. The vegetables are various and abundant. Such are its general characteristics.

This valley has been spoken of by travellers in the most glowing terms, and depicted as one of the most beautiful spots to be met with. Comparatively it is so. To the traveller who reaches it from Egypt and the south of Palestine, it appears like a kind of little paradise; and even when reached from the more verdant

and fertile north, it pretty well sustains its character. Instead of stones, and rocks, and barrenness, which almost universally characterize the country, especially southward, we here meet with a strip of land hemmed in on both sides by two gigantic mountains, somewhat green with grass, and studded with olive-trees, and in the vicinity of the town covered by gardens and orchards, luxuriant with vegetation, though destitute on the one hand of all traces of science, art, and taste, but abounding on the other with rubbish and filth of all kinds. Compared, therefore, with Palestine in general, the valley of Nablus is a beautiful garden; but with similar localities in our own country it will not bear a moment's comparison. Nevertheless, it contains within itself all the natural resources necessary to make it worthy of the most extravagant praise that could be lavished on it; and with European industry, and art, and taste, I do believe that it could be made one of the most charming spots upon the face of the globe. The two great agents of fertility, as is well known, are heat and moisture; and in this valley there is an abundance of both.

Perhaps I may as well notice the springs in the town and its vicinity before going farther. The inhabitants boast much of the abundance of water; and well they may. They speak of some scores of springs in the town and its neighbourhood; and I believe that, within some two miles' radius, from thirty to forty really exist. In the town and its immediate neighbourhood, however, they are more

copious than numerous; and here I felt somewhat disappointed in the expectation I had formed from some travellers. There is not a single spring watering the valley from the Ebal side till we have passed the city for some distance; from Gerizim to the east of the city there are two, whose sources are not far from each other, and near the watershed, about midway from the town to Jacob's Well. One of these dries up during the summer months; the other—*Ain Daphne*—a very copious stream—runs through an underground artificial channel for some distance, and issuing out near the road, continues its course in an open channel, past Jacob's Well, turning a mill on its way, and emptying itself to water the plain. Close by, in the little village of Balâta, is another excellent fountain, called by the inhabitants *Ain Balata;* it issues from a kind of subterranean chamber supported by three pillars, and flows in a stream sufficiently great to supply a population of twenty or thirty thousand. These three are the only springs to the east of the city, and within the Nablus valley; but these are copious enough to supply a very great population. Within the city itself the principal supply is derived from a stream descending along the ravine on the western side of the town, which flows in abundance along the channel of some of the streets. The fountains are numerous. The most remarkable, *Ain el Kerun*, is under a vaulted dome, and is reached by a flight of steps; the water is conveyed hence by conduits to two of the principal mosques and some

private houses, and afterwards serves to water the gardens. The various streams run on the northern side of the town into one channel, which serves to turn a corn-mill that is kept going summer and winter.

There is one feature pointed out by Van de Velde as belonging to this valley which I may as well mention. Having described the beauty of the place, he proceeds to say, "There is a singularity about the vale of Shechem, and that is the peculiar colouring which objects assume in it. You know that wherever there is water the air becomes charged with watery particles, and that distant objects beheld through that medium seem to be enveloped in a pale blue or grey mist, such as contributes not a little to give a charm to the landscape; but it is precisely these atmospheric tints that we miss so much in Palestine. Fiery tints are to be seen both in the morning and in the evening, and glittering violet or purple coloured hues where the light falls next to the long deep shadows; but there is an absence of colouring, and of that charming dusky haze in which objects assume such softly blended forms, and in which, also, the transition in colour from the foreground to the farthest distance loses the hardness of outline peculiar to the perfect transparency of an Eastern sky. It is otherwise in the vale of Shechem, at least in the morning and evening. Here the exhalations remain hovering among the branches and leaves of the olive-trees, and hence that lovely bluish haze. The valley is far from broad, not exceeding in some places a few hundred feet: this you

find generally enclosed on all sides; there also the vapours are condensed; and so you advance under the shade of the foliage along the living waters, and charmed by the melody of a host of singing birds—for they, too, know where to find their best quarters—while the perspective fades away, and is lost in the damp vapoury atmosphere." Now, allowing something for the colouring of an eloquent and descriptive writer, Mr. Stanley, in a note on this passage in his own work, says, "These remarks on the moist atmosphere of Shechem are so far confirmed by my own experience, that the valley between Nablus and Samaria was, when I saw it, wrapped in thick drizzling mist, such as I saw nowhere else in Syria." Now, there is no doubt that these gentlemen witnessed the appearances of which they speak; but it is a mistake to suppose that such are common to the neighbourhood. During my two visits to the place, I saw no phenomena of the sort, although during my later stay I had them particularly in my mind, nor could I learn from the inhabitants that they ever occurred. The subject, however, is of no great moment; it only shows how the most trustworthy travellers may be led to wrong conclusions from occasional appearances. I have only to add, that most of the singing birds seem to have caught a cold during my visit, for I heard only a few, and those but feeble songsters.

To the east of the two mountains and of the valley is a noble plain, stretching for several miles from north to south. Both sides are flanked by mountains; on the

west, those of Ebal and Gerizim; and on the east those lying between it and the Jordan valley. On the slopes of these mountains nestle several thriving villages. The plain, to some extent, is cultivated by the inhabitants of these villages, who raise a considerable amount of corn as well as other productions. The beholder might still point to its waving corn-fields, now in the beginning of the month of May, and say, in the words of our Saviour, "Lift up your eyes and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John iv. 35).

Before we dismiss our brief account of the neighbouring country, we may as well mention that Jerome, in his work, "*De Locis Hebraicis*" (voce Gerizim), locates the Gerizim and Ebal mentioned in Deut. xi. 29, 30; Josh. viii. 30–35, not here, but in the neighbourhood of the traditional Jericho, and charges the Samaritans with gross error, or something worse, in having placed them near Nablus. The monk had probably, with others before him, felt a difficulty in the history of the passage of the Jordan, to reconcile the real position of the two mountains with the position of the traditional Jericho; hence the selection of two mountains nearer to Jericho, forgetting the possibility of the site of the conquered Jericho not being yet discovered. But he seems to have laboured under another difficulty, namely, the improbability that the words of the law could have been heard across the valley at Shechem, as narrated by Joshua. We shall recur to this point in our next chapter. But as to the position of the two mountains—the Gerizim and Ebal

of Moses and Joshua—there can be no doubt. No spot in Palestine is handed down by tradition with greater certainty; but, independently of this, the sacred text defines the position beyond all question by placing them "beside the plains of Moreh."

My reader will, probably, recollect that another mountain-name is mentioned in the Old Testament in connection with this spot, either as another name for one of these two under notice, or as the name of a peak, of one of their ranges, *i. e.* Mount Salmon. From the narrative in the Book of Judges (ix. 48), it appears evident that Salmon must have been in the immediate vicinity; the name only occurs once again in Scripture, namely, in Psalm lxviii. 14, "white as snow in Salmon." I felt a little curious to know whether any tradition remained amongst the Samaritans concerning this mountain, and whether the name had entered in any way into their literature; but they knew nothing of it. Amram, as he himself informed me, had never heard the name.

About one-third of the way up the side of Mount Ebal, in front of the town, is a bold perpendicular rock, some sixty feet high, called, after a Mohammedan female saint, *Sit es Salamiyah*. In front of the rock there stands a building, consisting of two small chambers and an *oualy* for prayer, but all in a dilapidated condition. Near the centre of the rock is a cave, eighteen feet by nine; and another, in the western corner, twenty-one inches by eighteen, with its entrance closed by a stone wall. The legend says that the female

saint died at Damascus, and when put into a coffin, darted off through mid-air, and turned into this cave: when the western corner opened of its own accord to receive the holy remains. All the Mussulman pilgrims, as well as the Nablusites, visit this tomb, bringing with them a supply of oil to burn there to her honour. Generally, they have some request to make of her, such as to bless them with sons, or with riches, or to give them success in any enterprise: promising, in return, to be liberal with their lights to her honour. When I visited the place, dozens of earthen bottles, which had been used for carrying oil, lay scattered about; and scores of earthen lamps studded the ledges of the rock, where they had been placed to burn out their lights. From this saint, as already remarked, this part of Mount Ebal is called by the natives Sit es Salamiyah.

About half-way between the city and Jacob's Well, and nestling in a bend of Mount Gerizim, is the mosque *Sheech el Amud* (the saint of the pillar), so called from a Mussulman saint. This saint, however, is only a modern invention of the Mohammedans. By the Samaritans, the building is simply called The Pillar, their tradition identifying it with the pillar or stone set up by Joshua. They also believe that the celebrated oak under which Jacob buried the idols stood on the same spot.* The Mohammedans come here occasionally to pray, but no great honour is paid to the place, if we may judge from its present dilapidated state.

* See page 48.

CHAPTER II.

SCRIPTURAL ASSOCIATIONS.

THE most important neighbourhood in the early history of the country is that of Shechem. We have already seen that it was a centre of religious associations before it became the subject of sacred history, and that many, even then, were the social and political interests that clustered around it.

It is noticed by the sacred narrative for the first time in the account of the arrival of the father of the faithful in the land of promise. "And Abram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran; and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came. And Abram passed through the land unto the place of Sichem, unto the plain of Moreh. And the Canaanite was then in the land."—Gen. xii. 5, 6. From this brief narrative it is evident that the neighbourhood was already in the possession of the Shechem family, and the town, which has transmitted their name to posterity, in all probability, was already built. The patriarch halted at the "plain of Moreh," or rather, at

the *oak* of Moreh. Here the Almighty reappeared to him, and gave him the promise of the whole land; and here Abraham built an altar to the Most High. The whole narrative would suggest the idea that this oak of Moreh was not a common one, but that the place was already a consecrated spot, and the tree a sanctuary for patriarchal worship: just as we find the same kind of tree figuring in the druidical worship—and this, by the way, is not the only point of similarity in the two systems of religion. This idea of the sanctity of the spot will further appear if we admit that close by dwelt the venerable Melchizedek, "priest of the Most High God," who, in after years, went out with bread and wine to meet the patriarch Abraham, and to bless him (Gen. xiv. 18–20). That a town of the name of Salem stood in the immediate neighbourhood seems to me to be beyond all doubt. It is expressly mentioned, as we shall yet see, in the history of Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 18), and again, after many ages, in the apocryphal books (Judith iv. 4); and again it reappears in the New Testament, in the history of the Baptist (John iii. 23). The name still lingers there as the name of a village in the valley that runs towards the Jordan from the plain, occupying perhaps the very site of the ancient city. That this was the Salem of Melchizedek appears to me all but certain. It is true that Jerusalem is once called Salem (Ps. lxxvi. 2), and that Josephus identifies the Salem of Melchizedek with Jerusalem; but the fact of Jerusalem being once designated by that name is no proof that it must have been the Salem of Melchizedek,

though it would be enough to induce Josephus to identify it with the patriarchal Salem. On the other hand, the geographical traditions, as transmitted down by the Christian Fathers—especially Eusebius and Jerome—as well as by the Samaritans, locate it in the neighbourhood of Gerizim and Ebal. In addition to this, no other place answers so truly to the circumstances of the narrative, when fairly weighed in all their bearings. Our unavoidable conclusion, therefore, is, that the Salem of the great priest stood in this immediate neighbourhood, and perhaps on the very site where the present village of Salem now stands.

We cannot help thinking that the fact that this place had been an ancient sanctuary, and that Abraham here offered up his first sacrifice in the Promised Land, might have been prominent in the mind of Moses when he fixed upon this spot as the proper place to proclaim the Law to the people immediately after their crossing the Jordan to possess the land. "And it shall come to pass, when the Lord thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal. Are they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down, in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh?" (Deut. xi. 29, 30.) Such was the language of the great lawgiver, and he had probably in his mind all the associations that rendered the spot venerable and sacred, not the least of which would

be that here dwelt Melchizedek the priest, to whom even Abraham had paid tithe of all the spoil—that he had officiated under the venerable oak of Moreh, and on the heights of Gerizim, not to dumb idols, but to the "Most High."

There is one other circumstance connecting the patriarch with this place which I cannot pass unnoticed. It is the offering of his son Isaac. Let the reader open the Bible, and read the whole passage that refers to the subject (Gen. xxii. 1–14). At my first visit to the Holy Land, on becoming thoroughly acquainted with the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, I could not still the conviction that the Temple mount (Moriah) would in no way answer to the requirements of the narrative. A second visit only strengthened this conviction; and as I felt obliged to relinquish the old opinion, I was forced to accept the Samaritan tradition that the Moriah of Abraham was Mount Gerizim—the only mountain in Palestine, as it seems to me, that meets all the circumstances of the case. Dr. Stanley has summed up the question in a brief but lucid manner, and I cannot do better than quote his words:—"What is affirmed by the Gentile tradition with regard to the connection of Gerizim with Melchizedek, is affirmed by the Samaritan tradition with regard to its connection with the sacrifice of Isaac. 'Beyond all doubt' (this is the form in which the story is told amongst the Samaritans themselves) 'Isaac was offered on Ar-Gerizim. Abraham said, "Let us go up, and sacrifice on the mountain."

He took out a rope to fasten his son, but Isaac said, "No, I will lie still." Thrice the knife refused to cut. Then God from heaven called to Gabriel, "Go down, and save Isaac, or I will destroy thee from among the angels." From the seventh heaven Gabriel called, and pointed to the ram.' The place of the ram's capture is still shown near the holy place! The Jewish tradition, as represented by Josephus, transfers the scene to the hill on which the Temple was afterward erected at Jerusalem; and this belief has been perpetuated in Christian times as attached to a spot in the garden of the Abyssinian convent, not indeed on Mount Moriah, but immediately to the east of the church of the Holy Sepulchre, with the intention of connecting the sacrifice of Isaac with the Crucifixion. An ancient thorn-tree, covered with the rags of pilgrims, is still known as the thicket in which the ram was caught. But the Samaritan tradition is here again confirmed by the circumstances of the story. Abraham was 'in the land of the Philistines,' probably in the extreme south. From Beersheba, or Gaza, he would probably be conceived to move along the Philistine plain, and then, on the morning of the third day, would arrive in the plain of Sharon, exactly where the massive height of Gerizim is visible 'afar off;' and from thence half a day would bring him to its summit. Exactly such a view is to be had in that plain; and, on the other hand, no such view or impression can fairly be said to exist on the road from Beersheba to Jerusalem, even if what is at most a journey of two days could be extended to

three. The towers of Jerusalem are, indeed, seen from the ridge of Mar Elias, at the distance of three miles; but there is no elevation, nothing corresponding to the 'place afar off' to which Abraham '*lifted up* his eyes.' And the special locality which Jewish tradition has assigned for the place, and whose name is the chief guarantee for the tradition, Mount Moriah, the hill of the Temple, is not visible till the traveller is close upon it, at the southern edge of the valley of Hinnom, from whence he looks down upon it, as on a lower eminence. And when from the circumstances we pass to the name, the argument based upon it in favour of Jerusalem is at least equally balanced by the argument which it yields in favour of Gerizim. The name of Moriah, as applied to the Temple hill, refers to the vision of David after the plague. 'Solomon began to build the house in the mount of "the *appearance* of the Lord" (Moriah), where he *appeared* unto David his father' (2 Chron. iii. 1). Some such play on the word is apparent also in Gen. xxii. 8, 14; 'God *will see*'—'in the mountain the Lord *shall see*,' where the Hebrew word employed (Jehovah-*jireh*) is from the same root. But in the case of the mountain of Abraham's sacrifice, it was probably in the first derived from its conspicuous position as '*seen* from afar off;' and the name was thus applied not merely to 'one of the mountains,' but to the whole land (Gen. xxii. 2), an expression entirely inapplicable to the contracted eminence of the Temple. The Seventy, moreover, evidently

unconscious of its identification with the Mount of Jerusalem, translate it *τὴν γὴν τὴν ὑψηλήν*, 'the highland'—a term exactly agreeing with the appearance which the hills of Ephraim, and especially Gerizim, present to a traveller advancing up the Philistine plain, and also with the before-mentioned expression of Theodotus, 'the mountain of the Most High.' It is impossible here not to ask whether a trace of the name Moriah, as applied to Gerizim and its neighbourhood, may not be found in the term '*Moreh*,' applied in Gen. xii. 6, to the grove of terebinths in the same vicinity, of which the same translation is given by the Seventy, as of Moriah, *τὴν δρῦν τὴν ὑψηλήν*, 'the *high* oak'? Hebrew scholars must determine how far the difference of the radical letters of מריה and מורה is an insuperable objection to its identification.* In Gen. xxii. the Samaritans actually read Moreh for Moriah." †

To this view of the subject the Rev. Dr. Thomson, in his valuable work, "The Land and the Book," takes a very strong objection, and considers Mr. Stanley's arguments and criticisms mere "vagaries." To others,

* The etymology and signification of these two words would not have been subjects for so varied conjectures but for the preconceived notions of critics. There can be no grammatical difficulty in identifying both, whatever difference of opinion there may be with regard to the topographical question. Both are derived from יָרָה, to teach; and we find instances of similar formation in other words. For example, בְּוִיָּה from בָּוָה (Ex. xxi. 25), and פְּרִיָּה from פָּרָה (Ps. cxxviii. 3). These instances have been pointed out to me by an eminent Hebraist, Dr. Benisch, who, being an Israelite, could have no predilection for the Samaritan tradition.

† Sinai and Palestine, p. 250.

who are as thoroughly acquainted with the localities in question as Dr. Thomson is, they appear to be most conclusive. Dr. Thomson seems to be moved more with zeal for the Jewish tradition than for the simple truth; as if the facts in dispute had anything to do with the truth or falsity of Judaism or Samaritanism! Every reader of the Bible is well aware that the local establishment of the Jewish religion took place many ages after these events. Dr. Thomson has offered only one objection to Mr. Stanley's account that is worth our notice—a geographical one, and let us see what is its true value. His words are these:—"Mr. Stanley's geographical argument is more than feeble. It is almost absurd to maintain that Abraham could come on his loaded ass from Beersheba to Nablus in the time specified. On the third day he arrived early enough to leave the servants 'afar off,' and walk with Isaac bearing the sacrificial wood to the mountain which God had shown him; there build the altar, arrange the wood, bind his son, and stretch forth his hand to slay him; and there was time, too, to take and offer up the ram in Isaac's place. That all this could have been done at *Nablus on the third day* of their journey is incredible. It has always appeared to me, since I first travelled over the country myself, that even Jerusalem was too far off from Beersheba for the tenor of the narrative, but Nablus is two days' ride farther north."* Such is the pith of the Doctor's argument. Now let us turn to his own map, and see what the distance is from

* "Land and the Book," p. 475, London edition.

Beersheba to Nablus. And, on examination, we find that he agrees with maps in general, and makes it to be about sixty miles; and Jerusalem about half the distance. If the Moriah at Jerusalem was the mountain, then the patriarch had to travel ten miles a day to reach his destination in three days; and these ten miles a day seem, to the Doctor, to be too great a labour. I wonder whether he ever met with a Felachin or Bedouin who travelled along so leisurely? On the other hand, let us suppose Mount Gerizim to be the end of the journey. In that case, the distance per day would only be twenty miles, and we believe there is not a Felachin throughout the whole country, that would not do it with his "ass" with ease. We have travelled more than double the distance in different parts of the country; and have passed again and again from Jerusalem to Nablus in the shortest winter days—a road, as Dr. Thomson well knows, far more troublesome than that along the Philistine plain. And taking for granted that Abraham did all on the third day that the Doctor specifies—which, by the by, is taken gratuitously—the distance would in no wise be too great. And the narrative implies that the journey was not to be made very leisurely: we are expressly informed that the patriarch "rose early in the morning." Thus would the narrative rather imply that the journey could not have been to Jerusalem—a matter of three days' travel of ten miles per day only—but at least as far as Nablus. And when we consider that the local position of the Temple mount at Jerusalem does really

belie all the other circumstances of the narrative, and how Gerizim completely answers all its conditions, we cannot but conclude that the scene of the patriarch's offering could not have been at the former, but in all probability was at the latter place.

There is one other circumstance in connection with the general subject which we may as well notice here. We have already seen that Jerusalem became a place of importance only in the time of David. There is not a hint given in the sacred annals that intimates any sacredness attached to the place until the vision of that monarch (2 Chron. iii. 1). Shechem, on the other hand, had been selected as the metropolis of the conquerors. And one cannot but think that there must have been some peculiar reason why Moses selected the two mountains Gerizim and Ebal as the proper place where the Law should be read to the people. His words are, "And it shall come to pass, when the Lord thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and the curse upon Mount Ebal." Would the selection not lead us to suppose that the place was well known to the great lawgiver as a consecrated spot, where the patriarchs themselves had been offering their sacrifices to the Most High?

The great and solemn interest imparted to the place by the visits of Abraham is further heightened by the sojourn there of his grandson Jacob. On Jacob's return from Padanaram, having crossed the Jordan at the usual ford opposite Shechem (where his grandfather had pro-

bably crossed on his first entry into the country), he "came to Shalem, a city of Shechem," and here he took up his abode for some time. Connected with his stay there are a few incidents which cannot be passed over without notice.

1. And, firstly, we are told that he "bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money" (Gen. xxxiii. 19). This field, according to tradition—and there is no reason to doubt its accuracy in the present instance *—is the eastern opening of the valley of Nablus, already described, together with a portion of the plain in front of it. It was here the patriarch, after his anxious journey, pitched his tents; and here, like his grandfather, he erected an altar to the Most High, with the intention of settling there.

Here, also, on the southern side of the "parcel of field," and near the foot of Gerizim, did the patriarch dig a well, which remains to this day. Its identity has never been questioned: nor could it well be. It must have been well known to the people during the Biblical ages, so that the woman of Samaria could say to our Saviour without any hesitation, that their father Jacob had given them the well, and that he, and his chil-

* The language in the original is remarkably descriptive of this spot, and, in connection with the tradition, leaves no doubt as to its genuineness. The *sadeh* (שָׂדֶה), which means a smooth or level cultivated land, refers, beyond doubt, to the extensive, level, and cultivated plain already described.

dren, and his cattle had drunk of it (John iv. 12). It is hewn out of the rock, on purpose to hold the rain water, like the cisterns in general throughout the country.

And here, let us bear in mind that the wells of Palestine are of two kinds. One kind is the natural well of spring water, which is, upon the whole, very rare in the country. The other is the artificial well or cistern, dug with no little labour and expense, and rendered watertight, to hold the rain water. These are the common wells of the country: and the one under notice was of this kind. It is, therefore, to use the language of the Old Testament narrative—the only correct language in the geographical description of Palestine—not an *äin* (עין), a well of living water, but a *ber* (באר), a cistern to hold rain water.* Consequently, it must have been deep, to contain enough for the men and the beasts throughout the dry months. And so we found it was. In 1855, when we first visited the place, we measured it as carefully as we could, and found it to be nine feet in diameter, and a little more than seventy feet deep. But older travellers found it much deeper; and I have no doubt that in the time of our Saviour it was double its present depth, the stones and rubbish having now for ages been accumulating at the bottom.

When I first saw it, there was a small dome over it,

* True to the language of the country, the natives still call it *Beer*. The Christians call it *Beer Samariyeh*, the Samaritan Well; but the Samaritans themselves call it *Beer Jacub*, Jacob's Well.

under which we crept with some difficulty. Inside, we found a large stone lying on the margin, and covering a part of its mouth. Being seated upon it, we mused awhile upon the wonderful associations of the place, and the story of our Saviour's visit came to our minds with touching power. Having just travelled along the path that He had travelled, and sitting, perhaps, upon the very stone upon which He sat when "wearied with His journey," we read the affecting narrative of His conversation with the woman of Samaria (John iv.); and with the scene of the conversation before our eyes, every word seemed to be full of life. But how few are there of the inhabitants who now, as then, understand and feel those sublime utterances of His, "God is a spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth"! On my second visit in 1860, the mouth of the well was completely filled up, so that it was with difficulty I could identify the spot where it was. Nor could I learn how this had occurred. Some of my friends at Nablus thought that the torrents during the rains of the previous winter were the cause; but others believed that it was done by the inhabitants of the little village close by, on account of the well being bought by the Greek Church. The well, however, was completely hid from sight, to the great disappointment of many travellers besides myself.

On further inquiry, I learnt from the Greek priest that their Church had actually bought the well from the Turkish Government, including a plot of ground sur-

rounding it, of 229 feet by 180 feet. For this they had paid, he told me, 70,000 piastres; but another friend, belonging to the same community, told me it was at least 100,000. The priest and members of the community kept the matter as quiet as possible for the present, until the proper time should come, when it is intended to adorn the well in the most magnificent style, and to build a splendid church over it. What a pity and a shame it will be if one of the most interesting and genuine spots in Palestine be buried under marble slabs, and silver, and gold, out of the sight of travellers, merely to gratify the superstitious tastes of a religious community!

Such is the brief history of Jacob's Well. But the question which has struck many a traveller is, why the patriarch should have dug a well at all, when there is such a supply of spring water in the place? We have already seen that the present city is abundantly supplied, and that a copious stream runs close by the patriarch's well all the year round, and another similar stream a short distance beyond Joseph's tomb at the village of Asker. Why, therefore, should Jacob be at the trouble and expense of digging himself a cistern? The difficulty is soon solved if we bear in mind that these streams were in the possession of the natives—a hostile people, and more powerful than the patriarch; and it would have been most imprudent of him to remain dependent upon them for such a necessary blessing. And moreover, it is not impossible, but highly probable, that the stream which now runs past the well, in former

ages ran westward towards the city. It has its source in Gerizim, exactly on the watershed; and, as far as I could judge after some examination, it might flow westward with as little difficulty as in its present course. Thus, during the later summer months, the spring water at the end of the valley and on the plain might not be too much to supply the wants of the inhabitants. If so, it was a matter of necessity as well as of prudence that he should be independent in this thing. At all events, he would, as far as possible, avoid disputes with the Shechemites such as arose between his father and the Gerarites (Gen. xxvi. 17–21).*

There is another incident which connects the patriarch Jacob with the spot which we must not forget to mention: it is his burial of the family gods under the sacred oak. We have already seen that close by stood the oak of Moreh (Gen. xx. 6), held sacred in the eyes of the people from the most ancient times, and famous throughout the land, under which, in all probability, Jacob's grandfather had built an altar unto the Lord. This would render it doubly sacred in the eyes of Jacob and his posterity. Consequently, it was under the shade of this oak he buried the Assyrian gods which his wives had brought with them. Before they quit the spot to remove to Bethel, after the slaughter of the Shechemites

* Before dismissing this subject we may as well notice that Buckingham and other travellers have told us that there is another well in the town called Jacob's Well. I made particular inquiry for it, and was assured by my Christian and Samaritan friends that they had never heard of it. I have no doubt Mr. B. was imposed upon by his dragoman, as many besides him have been.

by his sons, the narrative goes on to say:—"And Jacob said unto his houshold, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: and let us arise, and go up to Bethel: and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem" (Gen. xxxv. 2–4). In allusion to this fact, the oak, in subsequent ages, was called "the oak of enchantments," אֵלוֹן מְעוֹנְנִים, which is loosely translated in the authorized version the "plain of Meonenim" (Judg. ix. 37).

The reason it was so called undoubtedly was, that these earrings and household gods were used for the purpose, and universally supposed to possess the power, of charming away all kinds of evil; a superstition generally prevalent throughout the East even to this day. And it is curious, as well as satisfactory, to notice how modern discoveries in Assyria have enabled us to understand the whole bearings of the incident.

It will be remembered that these gods were called *Teraphim* (Gen. xxxi. 19), rendered "images" in the authorized version; and the discoveries made by M. Botta, in one of the royal courts in the ruins of Khorsabad, enable us to form a correct notion of their

nature and importance; and I shall here avail myself of the description given by Mr. Bonomi.

"This court, like the one we have left, is paved with square kiln-baked bricks, stamped with a cuneatic inscription, supposed to contain the name of the king who built the palace. Before the three doors of the façade forming the porch, are holes the size of one of the bricks, and about fourteen inches in depth. These holes are lined with tiles, and have a ledge round the inside, so that they might be covered by one of the square bricks of the pavement, without betraying the existence of the cavity. In these cavities Botta found small images of baked clay of frightful aspect, sometimes with lynx head and human body, and sometimes with human head and lion's body. Some have the mitre encircled at the bottom with a double pair of horns; they have one arm crossed on the breast, and appear to hold a rod or stick, which is now too imperfect to allow of its shape being described. Others have their hair rolled in large curls; and others are human in the upper part, but terminate with bulls' legs and tails. Another curious circumstance respecting the pavement is, that the tiles or bricks cease at the threshold of the entrances, their places being supplied by a single large slab of gypsum, covered with cuneatic inscriptions. The slab of the centre is the entire length of the jamb, about fifteen feet by nine feet nine inches wide, and the inscription is divided into two columns, to obviate, as we suppose, a difficulty which is commonly felt in

reading wide pages of letterpress. And now comes the interesting question, For what purpose were these secret cavities and long inscriptions placed at the threshold? As we have no analogous contrivances in the temples of Egypt or Greece, any attempt to account for these peculiarities in the Assyrian structure may by some be considered purely speculative; nevertheless, we will venture to advance our surmises. In the first place, we may conclude, from the constant occurrence of the emblematic figures at the entrances, that this part of the palace, or temple, in the Assyrian mind was of the greatest importance, and connected with the religious opinions of the nation. We find the principal doorways guarded either by the symbolic bulls or by winged divinities. We next find, upon the bulls themselves and on the pavement of the recesses of the doors, long inscriptions, always the same, probably incantations or prayers; and finally these secret cavities, in which images of a compound character were hidden. Thus the sacred or royal precincts were trebly guarded by divinities, inscriptions, and hidden gods, from the approach of any subtle spirit, or more palpable enemy, that might have escaped the vigilance of the king's bodyguard. As regards the inscriptions, Botta found that they were all repetitions one of another, and that they, as well as the bricks, contained the same name, either that of a divinity or of the king. With respect to the clay images, he offers no remarks; but we would suggest that they are the תרפים, 'Teraphim,' a name given to certain images which Rachel

had stolen from her father, Laban the Syrian, and 'put them in the camel's furniture and sat upon them;'* evidences which favour the conclusion that the Teraphim, Laban's gods, were no larger than the images we are speaking of. The root, or original word, from which



Teraphim is derived, signifies to relax with fear, to strike terror, or רפה, 'Repheh,' an appaller, one who makes others faint or fail;† a signification that singularly accords with the terrifying aspect of the images found by Botta; and from their being secreted under the pavement near the gates, we conclude that they were intended to protect the entrances of the royal abode, by causing the evil-disposed to stumble even at the very threshold. Again: the word Teraphim being in the plural form, each individual figure is generally understood to have been a compound body, and this affords further coincident evidence, as the Assyrian images

* Gen. xxxi. 19, 30, 34. † 2 Sam. xxi. 16–22.

were likewise always a compound. Another word, however, occurs to us to be equally worthy of consideration, as it agrees so remarkably with the places in which these images were found. It is the Arabic word طوف 'tarf,' signifying a boundary or margin—a meaning analogous to 'doorway,' the margin or boundary of the chamber. Thus in both the Hebrew and the Arabic we have significations immediately connected with the gods Teraphim. Finally: we have another illustration, furnished by the modern Persians, who call their talismans 'Telefin,'* really the same word, the *l* and the *r* being the same in some languages, and easily interchanging in many. If these analogies in themselves do not amount to actual proof that the Teraphim of Scripture are identical with the secreted idols of the Assyrian palace, they are, at all events, curious and plausible: but when supported by what we know of the existing characteristics and superstitions of Eastern nations; of the pertinacity with which all Orientals adhere to ancient traditions and practices; of the strongly implanted prejudices entertained in the court of Persia respecting the going out and coming in of the Shah to his palace; and of the belief in unseen agencies, and the influence of the Evil Eye,† which has prevailed in all countries, and still exists in some, more especially in those of Asia and the south of Europe—

* Chardin, Voy., vol. ii. c. 10.

† From a superstition of the same kind, the late Viceroy of Egypt, Mohammed Ali, never, during his long reign, left the city of Cairo by the gate called Bab-el-hadeed. A Sheech had informed him that, if he ever went out of Cairo by that gate, he would never return to the city a Pasha.

our conjecture seems to amount almost to a certainty; and we therefore have no hesitation in offering it for consideration."*

And here it is curious to remark how the superstition of the people still clings to trees. Although the patriarchal or druidical form of worshipping the Most High under their shade, especially under that of the oak, has long ago become obsolete, yet in no country are the people more awed by trees than in Palestine.† There we meet with some sacred trees covered with bits of rags from the garments of pilgrims in honour of the trees. On others, we meet similar assemblages of superstitious rags as charms. Some trees are the haunts of evil spirits; and, more curious still, wherever we meet with a cluster of young oaks, the place is generally devoted to a kind of beings called "Jacob's daughters," which, undoubtedly, had its origin in the incident now under our consideration.

But we must further notice that under this same oak did Joshua set up the great stone upon which he had written the law of God, as we shall subsequently see (Josh. xxiv. 26). And again, under this same tree Abimelech was made king by the men of Shechem (Judg. ix. 6). And lastly, in all probability, under the same oak did Rehoboam meet the people when he was to be made king in the stead of his father Solomon (1 Kings xii. 1, &c.).

* Bonomi's "Nineveh and its Palaces," p. 179.

† The most ancient nations had their sacred trees. The Assyrians seem to have erected their temples near such trees.—Vid. Rawlinson's Monarchies," vol. i. p. 387.

How long this venerable tree, with its successors, continued to be held sacred by the people, it is impossible to say; and the exact spot where it stood is equally uncertain. I felt an intense desire to discover the place, and spent, in vain, many an hour in the search. According to the Samaritan, as well as the Mohammedan tradition, it stood where now stands the mosque *Amud*, on the foot of Gerizim, about half way between Jacob's Well and Nablus. It is a small, lonely, and insignificant building, with a court on its northern side, containing a couple of mulberry-trees, as representatives, I suppose, of the old famous oak. We shall have occasion to notice this building again in connection with one or two incidents of our narrative.

We must now pass down from patriarchal times to the time of Joshua and the conquerors. Our reader will probably recollect that to this very place Joshua led the host of Israel after they had crossed the Jordan. Moses had commanded them, when they should have passed over Jordan, to march westward, until they should come to the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, and there hold a public and religious assembly in honour of the God who had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt. We shall now briefly recount the circumstances.

1. And, firstly, let us hear the story of the blessings and cursings. "And it shall come to pass," saith Moses, "when the Lord thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon Mount Gerizim, and the

curse upon Mount Ebal. Are they not on the other side Jordan, by the way where the sun goeth down, in the land of the Canaanites, which dwell in the champaign over against Gilgal, beside the plains of Moreh?" (Deut. xi. 29, 30.) And again:—"And Moses charged the people the same day, saying, These shall stand upon Mount Gerizim to bless the people, when ye are come over Jordan; Simeon, and Levi, and Judah, and Issachar, and Joseph, and Benjamin: and these shall stand upon Mount Ebal to curse; Reuben, Gad, and Asher, and Zebulun, Dan, and Napthali" (Deut. xxvii. 11–13). Such were the divine instructions given by Moses to his servant Joshua, and these, we learn, were faithfully fulfilled. Having passed over the Jordan, the people eventually came to the appointed place, and pitched their tents on the plain to the east of the mountains, already explained. On the day when the Law was to be read, we are told that "all Israel, and their elders, and officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side before the priests the Levites, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger, as he that was born among them; half of them over against Mount Gerizim, and half of them over against Mount Ebal; as Moses the servant of the Lord had commanded before, that they should bless the people of Israel. And afterward he read all the words of the law, the blessings and cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There was not a word of all that Moses commanded, which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel, with the

women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were conversant among them" (Josh. viii. 33–35).

Let us now pause for a moment to review this wonderful event. All the people betake themselves out of their tents on the plain, and make their way from all directions to the valley between the two mountains. The ark is placed in the middle of the valley, with the "heads of the people" ranged on each side. The Levites of the one-half of the tribes, stood upon the lower spur of Gerizim to read the blessings, and the Levites of the other half stood upon the lower spur of Ebal to read the curses. The vast congregation filled the valley; and the women and children covered the sides of the mountains like locusts. The Levites on Mount Gerizim then read the blessings, and the Levites on Ebal read the cursings—to which the vast assembly responded, Amen! What a sublime sight! A congregation and a service, compared with which all other assemblies the world has ever witnessed dwindle into insignificance!

Those who have seen the spot, and have examined it, can readily realize the scene. Just where the two mountains approach each other nearest are the two lower spurs, looking like two noble pulpits prepared by nature, and here the Levites would stand to read. The valley running between looks just like the floor of a vast place of worship. The slopes of both mountains recede gradually, and offer room for hundreds of thousands to be conveniently seated to hear the words of the law. The first time I stood upon that lower spur

of Gerizim, the whole scenery struck me forcibly, as if Divine Providence had conformed its physical features on purpose to meet the requirements of the occasion.

To this simple narrative an objection has been brought, alleging that the distance between the two mountains is too great for the human voice to traverse. And this objection would have greater force still with those who imagine the reading to have taken place on the very summits of the mountains—an idea which has no foundation in the Scripture narrative, although some Christians, as early as Jerome, as well as Josephus and the Talmud, seem to have adopted the notion. In reply to this objection, authors have generally pointed out the great difference in the state of the atmosphere in that country compared with that of our own; and how much farther one can see and hear in Palestine than in Great Britain. Travellers have been surprised at these apparent phenomena in Palestine and Syria. We had a remarkable example on the very spot under notice. One day when passing down the valley, we heard two shepherds holding conversation. One was on the top of Gerizim, out of our sight, and the other was close by us in the valley. Dr. Robinson mentions a spot in Lebanon where the voice can be heard for two miles.

I am not aware whether any experiment to test the point had ever been made upon the spot previous to the one about to be mentioned. Having satisfied myself more than once during my stay in Nablus of its feasibility, and remarking this to my native friends there, a party, including Amram the priest, agreed to

go to the spot and test the question. Circumstances, however, prevented us from carrying out our resolution. But before I left the country two friends joined me, the Rev. David Edwards, of Newport, and Mr. John Williams, of Aberystwyth; and on our way northwards from Jerusalem we resolved to make the experiment. We had pitched our tent in the valley near the foot of Gerizim, on the line between the two mountains, where I have supposed the ark to have formerly stood. I clambered up Gerizim, and Mr. Williams up Ebal, Mr. Edwards remaining with the men at the tent. Having reached the lower spur, I found myself standing as it were upon a lofty pulpit, and my friend found himself similarly situated on Ebal. Having rested awhile, I opened my Bible, and read the command concerning the blessings in Hebrew; and every word was heard most distinctly by Mr. Edwards in the valley, as well as by Mr. Williams on Ebal. Mr. Williams then read the cursings in Welsh, and we all heard every word and syllable. Before we descended, Mr. Edwards requested us to sing, and gave out, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," &c. I commenced it upon the tune Savoy, or the Old Hundredth; but as I was standing on a very elevated pulpit, I pitched the tune in a key too high for them to join me. I was determined, however, to sing it through; and if I ever sang well and with spirit, I did so then on Gerizim, and was heard most distinctly by all. And it was our impression at the time, and still is, that, if the whole area before and around us had been filled with the

hundreds of thousands of Israel, every soul amongst them would have heard every note and word with perfect clearness.

2. Another important and interesting circumstance, in connection with the general narrative, was the writing of the Law on prepared stones. Joshua had been instructed by Moses concerning this. His words are these:—"And it shall be on the day when ye shall pass over Jordan unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, that thou shalt set thee up great stones, and plaster them with plaster: and thou shalt write upon them all the words of this law, when thou art passed over, that thou mayest go in unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, a land that floweth with milk and honey; as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee" (Deut. xxvii. 2, 3). The preparation consisted in plastering the stone over with a kind of cement, and whilst the cement was still moist, to write upon it with a style; or, it might be, after it had dried, to write upon it with red paint. The latter would, perhaps, be the more likely, as it would be more conformable with the Egyptian mode. Either of the two, if preserved from all violence, would remain uninjured for thousands of years in such a climate as that of Nablus.

The first of these monuments was a single large stone, as we learn from the Book of Joshua: "And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the LORD" (Josh. xxiv. 26). We are not expressly told that

Joshua had plastered this stone, or had written upon it, only that it was a witness to all the words of the Lord; but we can hardly doubt that it had the Law written upon it in order to be a speaking witness to future generations. However this may be, there is one point in the history deserving our notice, namely, that it was set up under an oak. This oak, which in our version ought to have been translated "*the oak* (הָאַלָּה, and the LXX., *την τερμινθον*) that was by the sanctuary of the Lord," was undoubtedly the very oak under which Jacob had buried the idols. We are further informed that it stood by the sanctuary of the Lord, a place selected of old for the worship of the Most High. We have already seen that this spot is now pointed out by tradition to have been where the present Amud stands; and we are further told that the very name *Amud* has been derived from the stone set up by Joshua as a testimony to the children of Israel.

Beside this monument, Joshua erected other large stones, containing the words of the Law, and prepared in a similar manner. As Moses had commanded that he "should write upon them all the words of this law," so we are informed in Joshua it was done. "And he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses, which he wrote in the presence of the children of Israel" (Josh. viii. 32). These stones, in all probability, were twelve in number, to represent the twelve tribes of Israel. I believe these to be the stones to which the Samaritan tradition refers as being buried on Mount Gerizim, as already narrated.

In addition to these monumental stones Joshua was commanded by Moses to erect an altar upon the mountain. His words are these: "And there shalt thou build an altar unto the LORD thy God, an altar of stones: thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them. Thou shalt build the altar of the LORD thy God of whole stones: and thou shalt offer burnt offerings thereon unto the LORD thy God: and thou shalt offer peace offerings, and shalt eat there, and rejoice before the LORD thy God" (Deut. xxvii. 5–7). In the Book of Joshua we find that this was done: "Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God of Israel in Mount Ebal, as Moses the servant of the LORD commanded the children of Israel, as it is written in the book of the law of Moses, an altar of whole stones, over which no man hath lift up any iron: and they offered thereon burnt offerings unto the LORD, and sacrificed peace offerings" (Josh. viii. 30, 31). That such an altar was erected there can, of course, be no doubt; but upon which of the two mountains it stood is a matter of dispute. The present Hebrew text tells us in Mount Ebal, but the Samaritan text reads Mount Gerizim. I shall not drag my reader into the controversy to which this passage has given rise, but merely state the difficulty. Dr. Kennicott, in his second dissertation, has brought forward very strong reasons in favour of the Samaritan lection. The pith of the matter is this: (1.) The blessings, according to *both* texts, were to be pronounced on Mount Gerizim—which would suggest that the altar and the law-stones,

as the foundation of all blessings, would be placed on the same mountain, and not on that of the cursings. (2.) There is no reason why the Samaritans should select Gerizim for their temple any more than Ebal, nor for their changing the text to support their choice. As Dr. Boothroyd observes, "The controversy between the Jews and Samaritans about their respective temples is nothing to the purpose. The question, then, was, not whether Gerizim or Ebal was the place of blessing, but whether the temple at Jerusalem, or the temple at Samaria, was the most holy place. If the Jewish Temple had been built on Mount Ebal, the Samaritans might have had some temptation to alter their copies; but as both mountains were unoccupied when they reared their temple, they had their choice of erecting it on either of the mountains: and is it in the smallest degree probable, if they had found in their copy of the Deuteronomy, the blessings addressed to Mount Ebal, they would not have chosen that mountain for the site of their temple? Whereas, when their temple had been built on Mount Gerizim, because there Moses had ordered the covenant-stones and an altar to be erected, it was quite natural that their enemies the Jews, in order to discredit their temple, should alter the names in the Book of Deuteronomy, and for Gerizim insert Ebal" (*vid. in loc.*). But all the ancient versions are in favour of the Hebrew text, which shows that if it has been tampered with, it must have been at an early date. As there is but little chance of discovering the sites of these monumental stones and altar,

it is of no importance, in an antiquarian point of view, which of the two readings is the correct one.

One other circumstance, connected with the place, remains to be noticed, namely, the burial of Joseph. The favoured son of Jacob, before his death, instructed his people, when God would deliver them out of Egypt to possess the Promised Land, that they should take him with them, and bury him in Palestine. His words are these: "And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt" (Gen. l. 24–26). The people's oath was sacredly fulfilled, as we read in the Book of Joshua: "And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph" (Josh. xxiv. 32). We have already seen that this "parcel of ground" is in the eastern opening of the valley; and tradition points out the lonely tomb on its northern side, near the foot of Ebal, as Joseph's tomb. Nor have we any reason to doubt that this was the site: it answers well to all the conditions of the narrative.

There is nothing remarkable in the present struc-

ture. It is surrounded by a common-built stone wall, six feet high and thirty-eight inches thick, plastered on the inside with mortar. The space within the wall measures nine feet and five inches, from north to south; and nine feet and thirteen inches from east to west. The corners nearly answer to the cardinal points. The doorway is in the northern side; and opposite to it in the southern wall is a place for prayer, looking towards Mount Gerizim, and marked by a niche in the wall, over which are two slabs of stone, with defaced Hebrew writing upon them: similar niches are in the south-west and north-west corners. The tomb itself is built diagonally across the floor, and not parallel to the walls, as is usual, with the head towards the door, and the feet towards the south-west. It is built of common stone, plastered over with mortar. It measures seven feet two inches long, three feet six inches high, and three feet ten inches wide at the floor, but narrowing as it rises, and at the top terminating in a ridge. There are, also, two pillars built of stone and plastered over, in the same style as the tomb itself—one standing at the head and the other at the foot—having cavities on their tops, to hold the incense burnt by the worshippers who visit the place. The larger of the two measures nearly four feet in height, and three feet in circumference. The walls on the southern side of the tomb are scribbled over with names of Samaritans, Jews, and Mohammedans, written in their different languages.

We have already seen that Joseph was embalmed in

Egypt, and, being the most important personage next to the king, there is no doubt that the usual appendages of royalty were placed with him in his coffin. If this is the real tomb—and there is every reason to believe it is—then underneath is the sarcophagus, and even the mummy of Joseph, just as they were when deposited by the conquerors. And most probably all the appendages are still preserved within the sacred chest, if we may so call it; and when the time comes to examine it, what wonderful confirmation to God's Word will its contents reveal!

Mr. Stanley states,* after Buckingham, that there is another tomb called the tomb of Joseph, which he identifies with the building we have already noticed as Mosque Amud; and tells us that it is said by the Samaritans to be called after Rabbi Joseph of Nablus: the authority for this tradition is not given. I put the question more than once to Amram the priest, and he assured me that he had never heard the place called by such a name—neither after the patriarch nor any other Joseph; and that he was totally ignorant of any other Joseph's tomb than the generally accepted one.

In conclusion, it is curious to observe how the Mohammedan legend obscures the simple Scripture narrative. The celebrated historian, El Mas'udi, tells us that "they laid his body into a coffin of stone, closed it with lead, and covered it with varnish, which keeps out air and water, and threw it into the Nile, at the town of Memphis, where there is a mosque of

* Sinai and Palestine, p. 241, note.

Joseph. Some say Joseph ordered that he should be buried in the grave of his father Jacob, at the mosque of Abraham." * And another version tells us that, when Joseph died, "such high disputes arose among the Egyptians concerning his burial, that they had like to have come to blows; but at length agreed to put his body into a marble coffin, and to sink it in the Nile, out of a superstitious imagination that it might help the regular increase of the river, and deliver them from famine for the future; but when Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt he took up the coffin, and carried Joseph's bones with him into Canaan, where he buried them by his ancestors'." †

* Meadows of Gold, &c., ch. iv. † Sale's Koran, note to chap. xii.

CHAPTER III.

THE TOWN OF NABLUS.

WE have already stated that the town stands about a mile and a half up the valley from its eastern opening, at the foot of Mount Gerizim; and here it may be observed, at the outset, that in its position it is an exception to the general rule throughout the whole country. All other towns are built upon elevations, as being more safe and secure from the attack of enemies; Nablus, on the contrary, is situate in a valley at the very foot of Gerizim. The only probable reason for this anomaly is the fact that it is one of the most ancient cities in the world—that it was first built when the inhabitants were quiet and settled, and no danger was apprehended from wandering marauders.

The name of the town was Shechem (שְׁכֶם), rendered by the LXX. Sychem (Συχεμ) and Sikima (Σικιμα); the word signifies "the shoulder," or more correctly, the upper part of the back just below the neck. It might have exercised the ingenuity of etymologists to find out its derivation from some of the physical features of the place (and relations more fanciful and far-

fetched have been frequently resorted to), only that, in the present instance, it is most likely a patronymic derived from one of its princes (Gen. xxxiii. 19). This is the only name by which the city was known during the Old Testament history. In the New Testament we have it under the name of Sychar (Συχαρ), John iv. 5; and Sychem (Συχεμ), Acts vii. 16—the Old Testament name, as above. Whence came Sychar it is difficult to decide:* most likely it was a nickname imposed upon it by the Jews, on account of the enmity they bore to the Samaritans; if so, the word would be probably derived from the Hebrew *shikkor* (שכור), drunkard, in allusion to Isaiah xxviii.; or it might be from *sheker* (שקר), falsehood, in allusion to Habakkuk ii. 18.

These were its scriptural names: it was known, however, by others. There is one mentioned by Josephus which demands our notice, inasmuch as it appears to have been founded upon the situation of the city. He states that it was called by the people of the country Mabortha, Μαβορθα (W. iv., viii. 1); and Pliny, following the historian, calls it by the same name, but writes it Mamortha (H. N. v. 13). This name has called forth much ingenuity of critics. Reland conjectures that both these forms are to be corrected from coins, which, as he shrewdly remarks,

* The only passage where this name occurs is the above; and Jerome maintains this to be a corrupt reading for Sychem (Epitaph. Paulæ, ep. lxxxvi. et al.); but for this correction there is no authority in any known codex or version.

are less liable to corruption than manuscripts, which read Morthia (Μορθια), and which he takes to be the classical form of the Hebrew word Moreh, which was associated with Shechem both in the Old Testament and the rabbinical commentaries. Olshausen has conjectured that the name is the Hebrew *Maavarta* (מַעְבַּרְתָּא), signifying thoroughfare, and thus called from its being on the great route from Jerusalem to Galilee. From Jerusalem to Nazareth, for example, there are four days' journey, and Nablus is generally selected by the traveller as the most convenient halting-place on the second day. It might have been so in ancient times; but why this place should, on that account, be called by this name, any more than one of the other halting-places, seems rather strange. It may be this: that in the immediate neighbourhood are the sepulchres of Joseph, Joshua, and Caleb, and others of the illustrious fathers in Israel, and that the Jews then, as now, felt it to be a great privilege to visit the tombs of the pious. Consequently all the Jews to the north of this place would make it a point of halting here, when passing to or from Jerusalem, so that they might have the opportunity of visiting the graves of their eminent dead. In this manner Shechem would, of course, become the greatest and most important thoroughfare on the route; and would, naturally enough, be called by the Jews Mabortha. According to this supposition, we should be led to conceive that a far better state of feeling existed between the Jews and Samaritans than is generally believed to have been the

case. If such a deadly hatred, as is generally supposed, did really exist between the two people, it can hardly be conceived how the Jews, on the one hand, would have made Shechem their halting-place at all; and, on the other hand, how the Samaritans would have allowed them.

I cannot keep thinking that the restricted sense of "pass" may be the true idea of the name after all, and to the Jewish mind and feelings it might have a double meaning—physical and social. The gorge-like little valley, hemmed in on both sides by a lofty mountain-chain, would not inaptly suggest such a name to a city nestling within its bosom; and doubly so when that city was the stronghold of their bitterest enemies, in passing which they had, probably, to endure taunts, ridicule, cursing, and perhaps something even worse. Such a place would be to them a Mabortha—a pass not easily forgotten. And such has been the character of this city in all ages: its inhabitants have always been domineering and insulting, from the time of the Ephraimites, through the Samaritan period, down to the present Mussulman bigots.

Having been rebuilt by Vespasian, after the Roman war in Palestine, it was called "Neapolis," the New Town, of which the present name, Nablus, is a modification, and is perhaps the only instance throughout the country where a comparatively modern name has survived the original.

We may safely say at the outset that the city must have stood somewhere in the immediate neighbourhood

of the present town, inasmuch as we are informed in the sacred narrative that it stood under one of the spurs of Gerizim (Judg. ix. 7); and by Josephus that it stood between Gerizim and Ebal (Ant. iv. viii. 44); and any one who has visited the place without having any previous topographical theory to support, would, I presume, conclude at once, from the great advantages of the spot, that the town must have remained where it now is through all former ages. But it is not so with authors: the site has been disputed and shifted over and over again, and in some instances placed on spots too ridiculous to be noticed. The earliest and the only ancient author we know of that makes a distinction between the old and the new towns, is Eusebius; if indeed he means to assert the fact, which seems doubtful from his mode of expression (Onom. Τερεβινθος: Συχεμ). His contemporary, however, the Bordeaux Pilgrim, who visited the place in A.D. 333, not only identifies the two cities, but also never calls the city by its new name, Nablus, but only by its ancient and biblical name, Sychem; and most likely he only thus expressed the general and perhaps universal opinion that then prevailed among the inhabitants. This was not only the Samaritan and Christian tradition, but also the Jewish; for we read in Midrash Rabbah, that Shechem, in Mount Ephraim, is Napulis (Sect. Masaar). But we shall not weary our readers with conflicting opinions of ancient or modern date. Probably the fact of the city being called by the Romans the "New Town," suggested the idea of its being

built on a new site at some distance from the original one. To us, however, it appears most evident that Nablus stands on the same spot as the ancient city; and our reasons are the following.

But first of all, let us see for a moment whether any other site be feasible. We believe that no one who has calmly considered the question on the spot, would attempt to place the ancient city in any other place than the present, except somewhere about the eastern end of the valley, unless he had some wild theory to support. Here, a little to the west of Jacob's Well, there is room for speculation. And firstly, we find a small poor village, with evident remains of former and better buildings. And again, adjoining the village is a large mound, extending almost across the valley, in all probability the entombed remains of a small town. And lastly, close by are streams of excellent water, sufficient to supply a very large population. In my own mind, I have no doubt that it was once the site of a flourishing town: but not the ancient Shechem. It was the town of Balata,* whose name is still retained by the little village. And regarding one of the streams, we have already intimated our belief that it might at one time have been flowing on the other side of the watershed towards the present Nablus. It is not at all improbable that it was first turned in its present direction by the inhabitants of Balata. If we accept the fact—and it cannot well be rejected—that the "parcel of field," which Jacob bought of Hamor, was at this end of the

* Vid. Parchi's Kaphta va-Fierach.

valley, it is impossible to conceive how the patriarch would have selected a place so near the city for his encampment, nor how the inhabitants would have allowed him to possess land quite under their walls.

But let us now see what reasons there are for the present site. The first and principal is its advantage of a good supply of water; and, in a climate like that of Palestine, one might think that this alone would be sufficient. We need not here expatiate upon so important a blessing; and a people who would have neglected such a spot for their habitation, and built their town at a place where no such supply was to be had, must have lacked the instinct of self-preservation common to all mankind.

Beside this, it is very evident that the road which connected the valley with the summit of Mount Gerizim through all past ages, is the one ascending behind the present city. It is true that there is another path leading up from the valley, about half-way from the city to Jacob's Well; but this has never been more than a kind of by-path, used by few except shepherds. The descent in one place is so steep that it never could have been a roadway for any beast of burden; and it shows no sign of a frequented road like the former. But we need not dwell upon this subject; the present beaten track carries its reality and antiquity upon its worn-out face.

Another evidence in favour of the present site is the discovery of antiquities in and around the city. These are neither numerous nor important in themselves; but as evidence on the subject in question they are of con-

siderable value. They consist of portions of walls, cisterns, fragments of potteries, and such like, all of early date, and some most certainly of Hebrew origin. These are either within the walls of the present city, or in its immediate vicinity. As no such remains are to be met with in any other part of the valley, it seems to be a pretty certain proof that the present site is the original one. I may here mention that I picked up fragments of pottery and tessellated stones in several parts of the valley, at some distance from the city, and also on the plain between Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb; but all these evidently belonged to a period subsequent to the Roman occupation.

I may also add—and let the reader take it for what it is worth—that all the Christian traditions of the place cluster around the present city. With the exception of the memorial of our Saviour conversing with the woman at the well, all the traditions that have lingered among the native Christians are located either in, or close behind, the present town. It is here we are shown the place where He sat to discourse with His disciples; here is shown the stone upon which He and they used to sup; here is yet seen the great rent in the rock, and many of the other miracles which He performed; in a word, the spots held sacred by the Christians of the place are all situated within and around Nablus.

There is one passage of Scripture which struck me forcibly when reading it on the spot, as bearing much on the present point. It is in the Book of Judges:—

"And Gaal spake again and said, See there come people down by the middle of the land, and another company come along by the plain of Meonenim" (Judg. ix. 37): but more correctly rendered, "And Gaal spake again and said, See there come people down by the summit of the land, and another company come along by the oak of enchantments." The point to which we refer is lost in the common version, but it is made clear in the corrected form which we have given.

Now Gaal "stood in the entering of the gate of the city" (ver. 35), and looked towards the east. One company he saw coming down over one of the two mountains—most likely Ebal—on his left; and the other company along the valley past the oak of enchantments. This oak was the notable one of which we have already been speaking. It must have stood either in the valley between the two mountains, or at the foot of either of them between the city and the opening of the valley; at all events it must have been to the east of the city. It is clear also, from the language of Gaal, that it stood at some distance from the city, which could not have been had Shechem been situated near the end of the valley. Any one of my readers acquainted with the locality will at once perceive that no spot answers all the conditions of the narrative so exactly as Nablus.

There is another incident bearing upon this subject to which we must refer—it is the address of Jotham to the people of Shechem. Let our reader take up his Bible and read the whole passage before we proceed, which is too long for quotation here (Judg. ix. 7–21).

Now, I know of no place, in the valley or on the mountain,* that would fit the story so well as Nablus. Jotham would have stood on one of those large projections on Gerizim that overlook the city. At dusk, when the people would have all gathered themselves into the city, and its doors shut—the din of the town having ceased, and deathlike silence all around—he would have harangued the people from his lofty pulpit, and, without any unusual effort, would have made himself heard by the whole population, and then withdrawn over the mountain. Such public criers are to be heard commonly in the Lebanon villages; and I have seen Nablus many a time in such a state of repose that any one might have addressed the people from the same spot without any extraordinary effort. And the narrative, thus understood, in its natural and common-sense view, goes far to prove that Nablus stands on the same spot as ancient Shechem did.

Whether Shechem or Nablus did, at a certain period, extend beyond the limits of the present city is another question. There is no doubt that one or the other, or perhaps both, did, especially on the eastern side: the fragments of walls and cisterns discovered there prove it beyond doubt.

There is one other incident to which we must refer

* M. De Saulcy has quoted this passage for the purpose of proving that Shechem stood high up the mountain (Journey, vol. ii.), inasmuch as Jotham stood in the *top* of the mountain. But the language of the narrative does not imply that he stood upon the highest point of the mountain—his standing upon any spur above the city would be narrated in exactly the same manner.

before dismissing this subject. The coins of Nablus are frequent under the emperors, and there is one that seems to confirm, in no small degree, the view we have taken of this question. In the coins of Titus, the type was a palm or laurel, with the name of the city written among the branches. But afterwards, Mount Gerizim was introduced, in the following fashion :—



Here is represented a building of some kind, most likely a temple, with a high tower close by, and a staircase leading up from the city to the temple. It is to these steps, beyond all question, the Bordeaux Pilgrim refers, when he says that there were 300 steps leading up to the mountain (*Itinerarium*). M. de Saulcy, for the purpose of reaching the highest point of the mountain, suggests that there must have been a mistake in the number of the steps, and proposes to read 1500 instead of 300; upon which his English editor remarks, "a very probable inference, which does not appear to have struck M. de Saulcy, but which seems to result from the general accuracy of the Pilgrim's descriptions, is, that, in the year 333, only

about 300 steps of this staircase were remaining. The Pilgrim does not say that this is the whole of the original staircase, but all he saw at the time; and that seems the more likely, as the staircase must have worn out by degrees" (Narrative, p. 348). But there is no room for such speculation. Any one acquainted with the spot will be at once struck with the corectness of the medal, and will not fail to see that the temple is built on the spur of Gerizim, which almost overhangs the town; and just at a height to require some 300 steps to reach it. On this point the medal is most satisfactory; and with it agrees most distinctly the language of the Pilgrim, which immediately adds, "thence, at the foot of the mount itself, is a place the name of which is Sychem."* It is singular that he should call the town by its old name, and not by the new, Nablus. It is a proof that he, at all events, identified the old and new cities, and has thus transmitted to us probably the almost universal tradition then current, as already mentioned.

Now, connected with the evidence borne by this coin to the relative position of the city and the mountain, I wish to call the attention of my reader to two points. The first is the circumstance, already commented upon, of Jotham addressing the people of Shechem. Let him, whilst reading the narrative, examine the coin, and mark the spur upon which the building stands, with the city down underneath, and the flight of stairs connecting the two: and I presume

* Inde ad pedem montis ipsius locus est, cui nomen est Sechim.—*Itinerarium.*

he will not fail to observe most strikingly the topography of the narrative. Let it be further observed that the language of the Pilgrim perfectly agrees with that of Scripture, when mentioning the height of the mount. The latter says that Jotham "stood in *the top* of Mount Gerizim;" * and the former says, that "there go up steps to *the top* of the mount,"† both evidently using common phraseology.

The other point to which I would refer is a passage in the "Antiquities" of Josephus, where he relates the circumstances of Jotham's address. There we are told that Jotham "went up to Mount Gerizim, which overhangs the city Shechem."‡ Let the reader refer to the medal once more, which will enable him to have a fair appreciation of Josephus's language, and bear in mind that the historian was well acquainted with the locality. There is no spot within the valley that can in any wise bear out such a description, except the site of the present city of Nablus, as exhibited on the coin.

Let us now take a very brief survey of the history of the town. We have already assumed that Shechem was a most ancient town, much anterior to the time of Abraham; although the first time we come into contact with it is on the return of Jacob from Padanaram (Gen. xxxiii. 18, 19). After the conquest of the country by Joshua, it was made the capital of the nation (Josh. xxiv. 1), for which its position in the

* בְּרֹאשׁ הַר־גְּרִזִים
Lit. "in the head of Mount Gerizim" (Judg. ix. 7).

† "Usque ad summum montem."

‡ Το ορος το Γαριζειν υπηρχεισαι της Σικιμων πολεως (v. vii. 1).

very centre of the country rendered it most appropriate. An additional importance was conferred upon it by creating it a Levitical town, and a city of refuge (Josh. xx. 7; xxi. 21). During the time of the Judges, Shechem seems to have retained its pre-eminence in spite of all the vicissitudes of the nation. Abimelech succeeded in conquering and destroying it (Judg. ix.), but it was soon rebuilt, and acquired its former power. In the time of David, Jerusalem, from political motives, was selected and made the capital; but even after the reign of the first three monarchs over the whole nation, Shechem continued its supremacy in the public mind as the rallying point of the nation. Consequently Rehoboam found it necessary to resort thither to decide the question of his succeeding to the throne (1 Kings xii. 1). The nation being divided into two kingdoms, Shechem continued to be the capital of Israel, even when Tirzah had been selected as the summer residence of the court. It was not till the reign of Omri that it lost its dignity, when that monarch built Samaria for his capital (1 Kings xvi. 24). And here we lose sight of Shechem—it is not mentioned henceforth at all in the Old Testament, twice excepted—once by an earlier prophet, and once by a later prophet. Hosea, referring apparently to its influence in the idolatry of the Ten Tribes, says, "And as troops of robbers wait for a man, so the company of priests murder in the way to Shechem*" (vi. 9). And from Jeremiah

* Auth. version, "by consent."

we find that it still existed in his time (xli. 5). Not long after this time it became the chief seat of the Samaritans, who erected their temple on the top of Gerizim. From Josephus we learn that the city was taken and the temple destroyed by Hyrcanus, B.C. 129 (Antiq. xiii. 9; De Bell. Jud. i. 2, 6); but from the New Testament we find that it still remained, and apparently in a flourishing state (John iv. 5).

It appears that, during the Roman wars in Palestine, Shechem suffered severely, and that it was rebuilt, or, at least, repaired and beautified, by Vespasian. It was then it received the name of New Town. Coins were then struck bearing the impress *Flavia Neapolis*, referring undoubtedly to Flavius Vespasian. The town continued to exist, in spite of all the misfortunes which befell the country, until the year 1113, when it was destroyed by the Saracens. A few years later (1120) we find that a council was held here by King Baldwin II., and the town remained henceforth in the hands of the Christians until the year 1242, when it was taken by Aba Ali, and once more came into the hands of the Mohammedans, in whose possession it has ever since remained.

The town, as already observed, is situate in the valley, about a mile and a half from its eastern opening. It stands at the foot of Gerizim, and stretches from east to west in an irregular form.

Just where the city stands there is hardly any flat valley, the gradual slopes of the two mountains dovetailing into each other. The town is surrounded by

gardens and orchards, luxuriant with fruit-trees, but void of all style and taste. The roads leading to it from all parts are in the most primitive and wretched condition; and the city itself is surrounded by all kinds of filth. The valley between the town and Mount Ebal is well nigh filled with mounds of rubbish — principally remains from the soap-manufactories; as is also the south-western side of the city. But, notwithstanding all its disadvantages, there is something very charming in the whole neighbourhood. It may arise more from the climate, combined with the associations of the place, than from its physical character. To clamber up the side of Ebal, and look upon the valley, with the town, gardens, trees, and mounds, with the two gigantic mountains shutting them in on both sides, is a most interesting sight. And in addition, long lines of camels are frequently seen going along the foot of Ebal—ships of the desert, carrying on the traffic between Jerusalem and Galilee, just as it was thousands of years ago.

But before we enter into the city, we must pause awhile to examine these mounds. During my first visit to the country, my attention, whilst remaining in Jerusalem, was drawn to two considerable heaps of ashes, which lay outside the city towards the north-west, and not far from the Nablus road and the so-called Tombs of the Kings. They are remarkable in themselves, being of a bluish-grey colour, having no grass or weeds growing upon them; and their peculiarity is greater when contrasted with the dark olive-

groves around them. These are commonly believed by the natives of Jerusalem to be heaps of refuse from the soap-manufactories of former ages. Mr. Finn, our late English consul, however, and some other members of the Jerusalem Literary Society, had conceived a different idea of their origin. They thought that it was not improbable they were ashes from the ancient sacrifices. Consequently they requested Dr. Roth, of Munich, when visiting Jerusalem in 1853, to carry some samples with him to Germany for the purpose of analyzing them, which he did, taking one sample from the top and another from the base of the mound. During my stay there in 1855, Mr. Finn received the result of that analysis, and kindly gave me a copy, which is as follows :—

	Ashes from the top.	Ashes from the base.
Soluble silicic acid	1·212	1·421
Alkali	1·150	0·820
Oxide of iron	0·762	0·875
Calcium	45·239	44·654
Magnesium	6·785	4·996
Residuum, red hot, but insoluble	6·965	6·637
Carbonium	1·706	3·570
Phosphoric acid	0·716	0·849
Aluminum	3·750	2·866
Carbonic acid	30·610	32·540
	98·895	99·228
Loss	1·105	0·772
	100·000	100·000

Such was the result of the German analysis. It was done, we were told, in Liebig's laboratory. But we should mention that Dr. Roth observed that the

analysis exhibited a small percentage of *silicic acid*, which is *never found* in the ashes of flesh or bones; but he thought that this could be accounted for by supposing that the ashes of the *meat offerings*, in which *silicum* may be found, were likewise carried off to the hills in question.

My curiosity being thus aroused, I also brought away with me samples from the top and base of the larger mound. When I reached Nablus my attention was drawn at once to those heaps, as being exactly of the same character as those at Jerusalem. I asked my Samaritan guide what they were, and he told me that they were carried thither from the city, principally from the soap-manufactories. I brought samples of these likewise. When I arrived home in England, I handed them over to the Palestine Archæological Association; and my friend Dr. Turnbull, who was then secretary of the Association, requested Professor Faraday to analyse them, which he kindly did; and the result is thus stated in the Professor's communication to Dr. Turnbull:

"MY DEAR SIR,—Though I have spent the best part of two days over your packets (because of the hopes attached to them), yet I shall have very little to say about them, for they do not satisfy one's desire. I find no evidence about them of their being ancient ashes of burnt animal substances; but conceive they must be the results of operations now going on, at least as respects those labelled '*Jerusalem*.' The one from the top of the heap at Jerusalem contains caustic lime, which dissolves out by mere water, and gives lime-water:

there are even fragments of lime, the interior of which is not yet carbonated, but dissolves without effervescence in acids. There is no structure as of bone about any of these pieces; no carbon in the state obtained from animal substances by burning; no vitreous ash or phosphate of lime. The charcoal which is there is vegetable, soft, and easily burns in air. This substance would not remain on the top of a heap, or even within three feet of its surface for a few years (perhaps five at the utmost) without changing: the caustic lime would have become carbonated. The substance from the *bottom* of the heap, labelled '*Jerusalem*,' is quite in accordance: it contains no caustic lime—all is carbonated. It is just like what that from the top would become in the course of a few years. That from Nablus is, in all respects, like the last specimen.

"Whether these substances are the scrapings of any lime-kiln or lime-works, or works (as of building or plastering) in which lime has been used, can be judged of only by those who know the condition of the heaps, and the circumstances connected with them, and have inquired into their history on the spot."

It is right that I should state here that no intimation was given to the Professor that these specimens were supposed by some to be the refuse of soap-boiling, but only that they were the supposed ashes of the sacrifices. The result, however, is perfectly satisfactory, and altogether precludes the supposition of their being animal remains.

We will now enter the city. It is surrounded on all

sides by a wall, of very common structure, and in a most dilapidated state, with two gates, one at the eastern and the other at the western end of the town. The gates are not made of brass, as some were in ancient times, nor would it require so much trouble to set them on fire as Abimelech had with its gates of old. They are so rickety that, with no great effort, their iron bars and locks would soon give way: yet they are of no small importance in the economy of the town. Here we still find a faint emblem of what gates were in primitive times—the great emporiums where all the public affairs of cities were transacted. The gates of Nablus still retain their importance in part: at the western gate the revenue department is still located. It is presided over by an elderly Turk, of no small dimensions, sitting like a lord on his Turkey rug, smoking his pipe and sipping his coffee, thundering execrations every now and then at the Arabs, who try to evade or dispute the toll; but he is polite enough, nevertheless, to invite you to join him in pipe and coffee, when you have made his acquaintance. One of his assistants is a keen, clever, and good-natured Greek. All who pass through the gates with any commodities to sell, and all purchasers, are charged a certain toll according to the value of their articles. The amount thus received per diem varies very much, of course; occasionally nothing is taken: but sometimes as much as 20,000 piastres is received, and frequently 10,000.

The main street, following the line of the valley from east to west, runs almost in a straight line the

whole length of the town, connecting the two gates; most of the other streets cross this, and are, almost without exception, narrow, irregular, and dirty. Most of them have, a channel in the centre, along which a stream of water runs. In the winter season these streams are full, but diminish during the summer months, and several are dried up. This arrangement of the water causes the town to be very damp during the winter months; and, however pleasant it may be in summer, it seems to be no good element in the sanitary condition of the place. This state of the streets, together with the fact of some of them being arched, makes the town uncommonly sombre and dull. Nevertheless, the inhabitants are most proud of it, and think there is no place in the world to equal it.

When we speak of streets, our readers must not imagine them to be similar to European streets, formed by the front of lines of houses, private or public; but the streets of Nablus, like those of other Oriental towns, are only passages between dead walls, excepting where the *bazaars* break the monotony. These are the Eastern shops or market-places, and they are comparatively numerous in Nablus. They are grouped according to the merchandise they contain, and are situated principally in the main street. One is for vegetables of all kinds; another for fruits, such as oranges, lemons, citrons, &c.; another for dried fruits—raisins, olives, figs, &c.; and last, but not least, comes the group of well-stores of tobacco. The principal bazaar is arched, and is very large and fine

for Nablus. It is the finest, by far, in Palestine, and equals any, so far as I observed, in the largest towns of the Turkish Empire. This is the clothing emporium, and is well furnished with the bright silk productions of Damascus and Aleppo—the Abas of Bagdad—calicos and prints from Manchester, in varieties too numerous to be named—as well as the productions of the town itself.

Besides the bazaars, the streets are enlivened by workshops. These are like recesses in the walls, and open to the streets; and as you pass along from street to street, you may observe all the handicraftsmen of the town at work. These consist of silversmiths, weavers, shoemakers, and all other kind of artizans necessary to the well-being of a community. The most extensive trades are the silversmith's and soap-making. The former, in addition to the town and the towns and villages around, has a good market beyond the Jordan, especially among the Christians of Salt. Their productions are of a very primitive character, but procure for them a good trade notwithstanding. The latter is considered superior, and has a demand, not only through Palestine, but also in Egypt and other countries. It is made of the ashes of the kali plant, which grows in the country, mixed with olive-oil—the oil of Nablus having the reputation of being of the most pure kind. Its other productions are fabrics of cotton, wool, camels' hair, and silk. Nablus, being the centre of a rich district, and, as of old, the gateway of the trade between the northern and southern parts of

the country, as also between Jaffa and Beirut on the one hand, and the trans-Jordanic districts on the other, becomes, of necessity, the mart of an active traffic. The consequence is that the inhabitants enjoy a greater amount of the comforts of life than those of any other town in Palestine.

All the houses are built of stone, and are heavy, dull, and sombre. Each house stands detached from its neighbour, and consists of several rooms, according to its dimensions. I shall, in another chapter, give a description of the one in which I lived, which will serve as a fair specimen of the rest.

There are no public buildings worth mentioning. There are five mosques, two of which were originally Christian churches.

Nablus being one of the strongholds of Islamism in Palestine, the inhabitants have been too bigoted hitherto to allow any antiquarian research to be made by Europeans. What antiquities may still be found in the town and neighbourhood, is, of course, uncertain; but we can hardly doubt that future research will discover valuable relics in the old capital of the first conquerors.

Jewish Antiquities.—There are a few small portions of the town remaining, in all probability, from ancient times. The arched passage, or street, in the Samaritan quarter, seems to be partly, at least, of this class. There I observed several bevelled stones in the old wall, of Jewish style and workmanship. I observed several similar ones in other parts of the town.

Other Jewish remains, in all probability, are the marble troughs used at the principal streams. These are five in number. The largest measures nine feet ten inches in length, twenty-three inches wide, and twenty-eight inches deep. They were dug up in the plain on the eastern side of Gerizim, and were originally the sarcophagi of the dead—most likely belonging to the first conquerors. I fancied that on two of them I could discover the vestiges of some kind of writing or inscriptions, but now too far worn off to be traced; some of them, if not all, had originally been ornamented. Whilst we were examining them, the people, especially the children, became so unruly, that we had to give up our attempt. They had imagined, I suppose, that our ultimate object was, through some magic or other, to remove the troughs to England. We made a rough sketch of one of the ornaments.

Samaritan Antiquities.—The only remains belonging to the Samaritans that I know of, are those connected with the mosque El Hadra, "the green," or Hussan El Yacub, "the wailing of Jacob," * as it is called. It stands to the western side of the Samaritan quarter. The present building is of modern date; but up to some 500 years ago it was the site of a Samaritan synagogue, dating, according to tradition, anterior to the Christian era, but wrested from its possessors by the

* These names have been given to this mosque from the Mohammedan legend that it was there Jacob wailed over the death of his son Joseph—that the aged mulberry-tree, which still stands in the court, withered at the news of the lad's death, but on his being found alive, became green again.

Mohammedans, and converted into a mosque. A few fragments of the ancient columns are built into the present walls, together with one or two slabs inscribed with portions of the Ten Commandments in Samaritan. These are all the remains of Samaritan origin hitherto discovered in the town.

Christian Antiquities.—There are no Christian remains that I am aware of, excepting two buildings, both being originally churches, but converted by the Mohammedans into mosques. These are the *Nosr* and the *Khcbir*, both now well nigh in ruins, but jealously guarded by the bigoted Mohammedans from intrusion by any unbeliever. The most interesting is the latter. Is stands in the main street, with its entrance towards the eastern gate. It has a magnificent porch, its columns, and capitals, and pointed arch richly and beautifully ornamented, but now in a dilapidated state. It is a work, apparently, of the twelfth century. The church itself has been used for ages as a mosque, but is now in ruins. No Jew or Christian is allowed to enter it, nor even to examine it from the outside, except by furtive glances. Before I left the town, however, I took French leave, and entered the court, with the intention of viewing it; but was soon surrounded by a clamorous and insolent rabble, who were ready to teach better manners to the Christian dog. I had just time enough to notice the baptismal font, now used as a water-trough. It consisted of the common marble of the country, measuring outside twenty-six inches in diameter, and thirteen inches deep. I noticed

also nine of the original columns of the church in the wall. The remains indicated the building as of Byzantine architecture. But without any further research, I found that my only safe course was to retire as quickly as possible.

CHAPTER IV.

THE INHABITANTS.
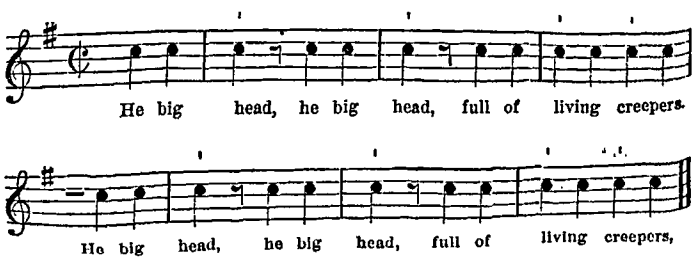
THE inhabitants of Nablus, with very few exceptions, are Arabs. It is difficult to say what is the number of its population, inasmuch as no census has been taken. I was told by one of the leading officials of the town that it amounted to twenty or twenty-five thousand. My impression, however, is, that it could not be half that number. Perhaps from eight to ten thousand would be nearer the mark.

The natives do not divide themselves according to their nationalities, but according to their religion. It is true that nationalities and creed coincide upon the whole, except in the case of the native Christians, who belong, with very few exceptions, to the Greek Church; and should any of these change their faith, and become Protestant or Roman Catholic, they would be called after the nation to which their new teacher happened to belong. Thus the inhabitants are divided into four communities:—Mohammedan, Christian, Samaritan, and Jewish; the Mohammedan numbering about 9400; the Christian, from 500 to 600; the Samaritan, 151; and the Jewish, about 100.

The people of Nablus and its dependencies have been notorious for their spirit of independence and

bravery from the earliest ages. Whether there be something in the locality of Mount Ephraim tending to foster such a spirit, is not for us to decide; but one thing is evident, that neither the change of nationality nor the change of religion has been able to quench it. The present inhabitants still retain the old character. No district in Syria has been more turbulent and less manageable to the Turkish Government, than that of Nablus and the surrounding villages; and no people in Palestine are so deeply imbued with the fanaticism of Islam. By those Europeans in Jerusalem who knew them best, my stay amongst them was considered anything but safe. Many a time, when walking in the streets, was I soundly cursed, with now and then an intimation of something more practical. No violence, however, was attempted: it all ended in words. Perhaps, from circumstances which I shall yet mention, their hatred of Christians was more intense than usual; but, at any time, Nablus is not the safest place for a Frank to remain in. There is a mixture of bigotry and gruffness in all the inhabitants; and even in their highest officials, with one or two exceptions, you miss that grace which characterizes the better class of Mussulmans elsewhere. It is only right, however, that I should mention here that I met with much politeness from some of their leading men. Whether it sprang from real feeling, or a mere hollow show, I knew not, nor did it much matter to me, as long as I could go in and out uninjured. My objects were amongst the other communities.

The children, not being accustomed to Europeans, as are the children of Jerusalem, and some other towns, took a very great interest in me. My European dress excited in them no little curiosity, but especially my hat—a jim-crow, with white calico around it, in the form of a large turban. I, like other travellers, had adopted such a head-dress for the sake of defending my head from the rays of the sun, which pour down in the hot months with such intensity as to deprive one occasionally of one's senses, and even life; and I had no wish to lose the one or the other. But my wide brim amused the children marvellously. As sure as I made my appearance in the street, a number of them would follow after me to sing my praises. And here I may remark, *en passant*, that the Arabs are passionately fond of singing. All things are done by them singing, except quarrelling; and they would even quarrel singing, were it possible, quarrelling and singing being to them a second nature. Well, as sure as I made my appearance in the street, in less than five minutes a number of them would follow after me, to give me a song, in their own language, of course. Here it is:—



and so on, *da capo*, for ever and ever. There is an old Welsh adage that says, "The guilty are always suspicious." And so it was with the children of Nablus: they were covered with living creepers, and would fain persuade each other that I was so too. I knew, however, that I need not distrust myself on that point; and if their song pleased them, it did me no harm.

Christianity was planted among the Samaritans at Nablus by the great Founder Himself (John iv. 5–42). The same doctrine was received in several of their cities through the subsequent preaching of the Apostles (Acts viii. 25); and it appears that the establishment of flourishing churches was the result (Acts ix. 31; xv. 3). We shall not attempt to follow the scanty Christian records of Samaria through subsequent ages, but merely observe that there still exists a remnant of that community to this day. They are looked down upon by their Mohammedan brethren with great contempt, and frequently oppressed and ill-used. It is not our purpose here to give a full account of this community; but it would not be amiss, perhaps, to introduce some of its leading members to the notice of our readers.

The priest, Machaeel, a native, is a man of from 55 to 60 years of age; moderate in size, thin, with pale face, wearing long hair and beard of a dark colour, with black and piercing eyes. His countenance is not very intelligent, but full of kindness; rather meanly dressed, with a very large dark blue turban on his

head. At that time he was living in a small and poor room, in consequence of some heavy misfortune which he had met with the previous year. He gave me a pitiful account of himself. He formerly possessed two large flocks, kept at some distance from the town, together with some productive fields. One morning it was told him that both flocks had been stolen by a band of Arabs from the Jordan; and, hastening to the spot, he found it to be the fact. He and his son went then to know the fate of a servant who had been watching the produce of the field, and, to their horror, they found him murdered, and all the crop stolen and destroyed. Thus, like Job of old, his all was gone in a day. To add to his misfortune, some of the soldiers belonging to the local government entered his house, and, with violent hands, emptied it of all its furniture—much of which was lost—and took possession of it: he and his family were houseless in an instant. It was useless to remonstrate; nor had he the faintest hopes of redress from the government for these outrages. He said he was thus treated merely because he was the Christian priest. He was not at all an educated man, only able to perform the services of his church, and that was all; but in total ignorance of all literature and science. In spite of this he had a large amount of liberality. We frequently conversed on religious topics, when he always admitted the supreme authority of Scripture on these matters, and not unfrequently conceded the Protestant view of the case to be the correct one. His position as a priest had not inflated him with the least

degree of pride or arrogance, but he moved amongst his people as one of the humblest. One could not but admire him for his good temper and agreeable manners.

Next to the priest was the head of their convent, Gregorios Tretalos, a native Greek, from the island of Zante. He was a man of about 50 years of age, of middle height, strongly built, with a good Grecian countenance. He was an educated man; conversant with the literature of his Church and people, and had studied the language of the country with great attention. He had left his native island to lead here a very secluded and humble life. He was far more agreeable and polite than one could have expected, and evinced no small amount of liberality of sentiment. He was remarkably modest in manner and opinion, but free and communicative. We had much intercourse during my stay with them; and, from all I saw and heard of him, he appeared to be a sincere and devoutly good man in his own way. He seemed to have but little spirit for instructing and improving his community: I felt, notwithstanding, a great respect for his simplicity and honesty of character.

Next to him came Girius Mazbar, the political head of the community. He was under the middle size, and of slight habit, well-formed features, with dark keen eyes, and occasional glances that did not inspire one with full confidence in his perfect integrity. He was the best-looking of them all, and much better dressed than any of his community. He possessed a very keen intellect, and natural abilities of no common order.

He seemed to be able to control himself far better than any of his brethren; and was much more polite in his general behaviour than could have been expected from one in his position. He was the best qualified, undoubtedly, of any in his community, to fill the office which he held.

We hardly need to add that these Christians belong, in faith and practice, to the Greek Church; and very fully participate in the general ignorance and superstition of Eastern Christianity.

A Protestant community had been formed here by Dr. Bowen, the late lamented Bishop of Sierra Leone. On my first visit to Nablus, in 1855, Mr. Bowen was then residing in the place, and kindly invited me to stay in his house as long as I remained in the town. A better missionary never entered his field of labour than was Mr. Bowen. He was eminently calculated for his work among the Arabs. A man with a noble, free, and warm heart, with none of those punctilios too often observable in Europeans; those airs of superiority, which are so quickly detected and so keenly felt by the natives. There was nothing forbidding in his manner—nothing that would suggest to the native, "Come not near to me; for I am holier than thou!" He shook them cordially by the hand, sat with them and smoked his pipe, and made them feel that he was truly their brother. He introduced a loom and an oil-press of superior qualities to the natives, and commenced instructing them in several useful arts, as well as in religion. A congregation was

formed, and a day-school also, both of which appeared, at the time, to be most promising. On the Sunday morning, about thirty adults were present in the service, besides several children; and a native preacher, a convert from the Greek community, delivered a very warm discourse. Circumstances, however, called Mr. Bowen back to England, after a little more than twelve months' residence. When he had left, the Protestant elements were too incoherent to unite and prosper. In addition, not many months after his departure, a sad calamity befell the little community. The Rev. S. Lyde, a missionary, when passing through Nablus, by some unaccountable misfortune shot a dumb man, a Mohammedan, outside the city. This man had officiously held Mr. Lyde's horse, and had pertinaciously followed after him, demanding payment, but refused. At last he stopped the horse, and took hold, seemingly, of a loaded pistol that was in the holster of the saddle, and in the struggle between him and Mr. Lyde it went off, and the poor fellow dropped dead on the spot. My friend Yohannah happened to be with Mr. Lyde at the time, and at once perceived the danger. Returning as quickly as possible, they made their way to the father of the dead man. They admitted the fact, and began to offer him blood-money, which would have been accepted, and the matter settled, according to Arab law, had the offender not been other than Moslem. The father, with characteristic love of *backshcesh*, when he heard the price, exclaimed, "He is not my son, he is your son," &c. But the rumour

was already abroad, and rapidly spreading through the city, that a Christian dog had killed a Moslem. They were soon surrounded by a mob, which was rapidly increasing, and Yohannah saw that their only chance of escape was, if possible, to fight their way to the governor's house, which they fortunately succeeded in doing. Mahmoud Beck Abdul Hady, the governor, sheltered Mr. Lyde, and retained him as prisoner. He was soon afterwards tried at Jerusalem, and fined a certain sum, to be paid to the father. Yohannah, conscious of his own innocence, having safely lodged Mr. Lyde at the governor's, returned homewards; but the Moslem fanaticism having been raised to a frenzy, the mob were mad, and began to wreak their vengeance upon the few Protestants. Yohannah was beaten without mercy, and only escaped with his life through the assistance of a Moslem friend. The Protestant houses were broken into and plundered, the inmates treated with great brutality, and one native, father of the Prussian agent, was actually beaten to death. The Protestant school-room was also broken into, and the bell, the introduction of which had given them great offence, was cut down and broken to pieces, and the furniture destroyed. In fact, the little flock which Mr. Bowen had so fondly gathered were thus ruthlessly scattered in a day, and the good which he had effected was more than destroyed. An indemnity of 55,000 piastres was adjudged by the Porte to the injured Christians, and paid some two years after; but this was but small compensation for the injury done.

On my visit in 1860, there were a few still retaining the Protestant name, but not much of its true spirit. The best members had left the place, and were living in Jerusalem. Those that remained were of very inferior quality. They had not met to worship together in public for some time till the first Sunday after my arrival; and I soon found that there existed such envy between those who were expected to take the lead, that I feared but little good could result from our meetings. The day-school had continued, and was incomparably the best in Nablus. The two teachers were converts from the Greek Church, and educated in the Protestant school at Jerusalem. Their attainments, though not what one would have wished them to be, were sufficient for their pupils. Their moral defects grieved me more than their mental. They evinced much kindness, especially Yacub; but both lacked that honesty so essential in a teacher, but so lamentably wanting in the Arab character. The school is supported by the Mission at Jerusalem; and I frequently sympathized with Bishop Gobat in his arduous task of carrying things on with such materials.

I cannot dismiss this subject without adding a few words on missions to Palestine in general. The natives' duplicity of character renders it a very difficult matter. When conversing one day with the Greek priest, he said, "You may get over my people to Protestantism for a good dinner; and they will return for another dinner." I had no reason to disbelieve him. My host was originally of the Greek community, but had offered himself

to the Protestants with the expectation of a certain sum of money. The money not being forthcoming, he gave up his Protestantism in twelve months, and was now endeavouring to introduce Romanism with the same hopes. Nor was he ashamed of avowing this. One day, when trying to show him the wickedness of such a course, he summed up his arguments: "You received from us the Gospel, the best of all things; and it is only right that we should have some of your worldly things." I could fill pages with facts on this point, were it of any good purpose, that would shock and disgust every honest mind. It is difficult to know how to deal with such a people; and is a subject upon which the best and most experienced men may differ. In my humble opinion, the best mission would be one to enlighten and not to proselytize. Let the agent go amongst them, and teach them the Word of God—not with the view of forming a new and separate community, which only adds to the difficulties; but only for the sake of bringing them to a knowledge of the truth. There is generally felt an over anxiety for results, and these results become palpable only in the number of converts: hence the importance of being able to report new converts. This may arise from the best of motives, but I believe it is not the healthiest state of things. Let the missionary do his work quietly, and in love; not creating a division in the Christian community already exising, but endeavouring to purify it through the truth, and eventually the results will become apparent.

CHAPTER V.

DOMESTIC LIFE.

THE ancient manners and customs of Palestine are still retained among the Arabs and Samaritans. Among the present Jewish population they are but found in part, mixed up with the varied habits of the nations and countries of their dispersion; and thus biblical life is only reflected by them to a very limited extent. In all other communities, however, we find the domestic scenes so frequently alluded to in Scripture faithfully preserved. There are no new monthly or yearly fashions about them, but the old patriarchal modes still remain the custom down to this day; and there is, perhaps, no spot in the land where they are more genuine and less modified by foreign influence than in Nablus. The essential differences between the Samaritans and the Arab population we shall subsequently point out; but in general life they are very similar. To know their domestic life is interesting in itself; but regarding it as reflecting the moral condition of society, and as forming a part of the history of the human mind, it becomes important as well as interesting. To the

biblical student and scholar it is of paramount importance. There are hundreds of passages in holy writ the meaning and beauty of which can never be clearly seen without this knowledge, because their present domestic scenes are just what they were in biblical times. My object, therefore, in this chapter, will be to lead the reader behind the curtain; to show him the actual state of the life and manners of the inhabitants. This I cannot do better than by giving a brief but faithful narrative of what I witnessed amongst them.

We must begin with the house where I took up my abode. The entrance from the street was through a heavy strong door. There were no inscriptions over it, as is generally the case, especially with the Mohammedans; for they never set up a gate or door without writing upon or over it some sentences from the Koran, or from some of their eminent poets. It was strongly barred on the inside (2 Sam. xiii. 18), to prevent any one entering without its being first opened by the inmates. A heavy iron knocker was attached, and two or three tremendous blows with this would generally suffice. Warde, the little servant-girl, would then reply with "Who is there?" (Acts xii. 13.) If the voice was known to her, and that the voice of a friend, the door was opened; but if not, the fact was communicated to the family. Having entered, we find ourselves in a small irregular court, with rooms of various size and purpose surrounding it. And here let it be observed that, to comprehend an Arab house, we must make

this distinction between house and room. The *dár* or house consists of a number of rooms, many or few, as the case may be; but has no communication with the next houses—it stands alone as the family's castle. The *beit* or room, again, stands detached; so that there is no communication between the different rooms: there are some exceptions, but this is the general rule. So, in the present house all the rooms stood detached, each room having one door, and that opening into the court, which is uncovered, but screened from the observation of all but the inmates by the high wall of the house on all sides. We shall now enter one of these rooms, the one where the family generally take their meals and entertain their friends. This, described, shall serve as an example of the rest. The first thing we notice, close by the door, is a part of the floor formed into a square, some inches lower than the general floor: this is the *atabi*, or the place where they take off and leave their shoes. Our habit of showing respect is to take off the hat; but their mode is to take off their shoes. Consequently they never enter places of worship, nor generally their own rooms, without taking them off and leaving them thus at the door (Exod. iii. 5; Josh. v. 15). Their feet and legs are therefore naked, because neither male nor female ever wear stockings.* The females, when in the house,

* The shoes worn in Nablus are of two kinds. One is the loose slipper-like shoe, made of morocco, and imported principally from Damascus. These are comparatively expensive, and only worn by the better classes. The other kind is the common Arab shoe, in shape

never wear shoes. When in the room they are barefooted like the males; but when out in the court they wear the *kulkols*, a kind of wooden pattens, or rather sandals, with two upright bits of board under each, which lift them from the ground from six to twelve inches, as the case may be. When thus walking, the woman looks just as if going on low stilts, stamping along, until she reaches the door of the room, where the *kulkols* are dropped off, and left on the outside till she again leaves the room. The floor was made of a mixture of mud and lime. On the farther side from the door a narrow piece of carpet was stretched by the wall, the whole length of the room, and pillows laid against the wall. In this wall, which fronted the street, were two windows. The windows in Palestine are frequently only square holes in the wall (Acts xx. 9); but these, like most of the windows in Nablus, were ornamented with latticework. This admitted air and light, although they depend more for the latter from the doorway, as the door is seldom shut. The lattice was sufficiently open to look through (Judg. v. 28; Prov. vii. 6), and to observe anything from the outside (Cant. ii. 9); but too high from the street for any one, even on horseback, to look in. The ceiling was a vaulted one; it was plastered and whitewashed, and like the walls (at all events when

similar to our own, but of the most clumsy and primitive make, manufactured by the natives. They are made of goat's or sheep's skin, poorly dressed; and are some defence to the feet from stones, but hardly any at all from cold or wet. These are the shoes worn by the poorer class in the town, and universally by the country people.

new), was without either inscriptions or adornments, which are so common in the East. No timber was used for any part, except for the frame of the door and the latticework of the window.

There was no chimney to the room, nor to any other room—chimneys are unknown to the natives. There were none in ancient times; although it seems from the prophet Hosea (xiii. 3) that some houses in his time had apertures through which the smoke escaped, but not a chimney, as in the authorized version. No chimneys are wanted: most of the poor people go without fire, even in the coldest season, except for cooking, which is always done in an outer room. The room was warmed, when necessary, by bringing in a brazier, in the form of a large dish placed on a stand, filled with charcoal.* This was lit in the court, and left there to burn until red hot—charcoal fumes being most injurious to health—and then removed into the room, and generally placed in the middle.

There was no furniture—no table, no chairs, no stools, nor hardly anything we meet with in European houses. The most important articles were a cradle for the infant, argeelehs and pipes to smoke with, and a stand for the lamp. This stand was made of wood, and stood about three feet high: the top was a flat surface, made to support three lamps, in the form of a

* Charcoal (and not coal, as rendered in the authorized version), in all probability, was the usual fuel for warming rooms in ancient times (Jer. xxxvi. 22; John xviii. 18). Wood, and not charcoal, was used for cooking.

triangle. The *lamp*—the common lamp of the country—was of earthenware, about the size and form of a shell some three inches in diameter, with a small grooved lip, upon which the burning end of the wick rested. At night, the stand, with its lamps, was placed in the middle of the room, the lamps fed with olive oil, and one of them generally lighted. Sometimes the three were burning: even then the light was very dim. I could easily comprehend the force of the parable of the woman who had lost the piece of silver lighting a lamp * to seek for it (Luke xv. 8).

On the wall, near the door, was a row of nails on which to place the lanterns of the visitors. One of the laws of the country is, that no one is allowed to go out after sunset without a lantern in his hand.† Therefore, should it be even a light beautiful night, one must furnish himself with a lantern; but should it be dark, he cannot well do without it. The streets are so narrow and rugged that it is almost impossible to go along without a light; and moreover one is in danger from the hungry and savage dogs that infest the streets. During the day they act as scavengers, and whether walking about or lying, are quiet enough; but when the night comes on, they arouse themselves, and assume quite another character.

* A lamp (λυχνον), and not candle, as the authorized version renders it.

† This law is enacted for the sake of preventing robbery. In modern as well as in ancient times (Job xxiv. 14; Oba. 5; 1 Thess. v. 2), the thieves of Palestine, like those of other countries, choose the night to execute their foul deeds; and to go without a light is a sign of evil designs.

They go about in all the ferocity of their nature, barking and howling continually, and ready to pounce upon any one if without a light. The Psalmist could hardly select a more graphic comparison of the importance of revealed truth, than a lamp unto his feet and a light to his path (Ps. cxix. 105). I shall never forget one night in Jerusalem, in returning from the English consul's house to my lodgings at the other end of the city, when, in a lonely dark spot, surrounded by these ferocious brutes, my light nearly went out. I never felt more anxious in my life. The incident gave me a perfect idea of the description which the Psalmist gives of his enemies: "They return at evening: they make a noise like a dog, and go round about the city" (Ps. lix. 6). The lantern is of the same form as the one known in England as the Chinese lantern, made generally of calico, but the smaller size of paper; and is a fair representation of the ancient lanterns of the country.

Opening into the court on the floor, and adjoining this room, there was another similar room, used as a bedroom and store-room, and also sometimes as a common dwelling-room, as circumstances might require. On the opposite side were the cooking and lumber rooms, &c. On the first flight of steps, which led up from behind the outer door, opened another room, built over the rooms already described. This was the family bedroom. And here let it be observed, that, very unlike to our Western ideas and habit, the Easterns sleep all as a family in the same room, parents with

their children, and their children's wives should they have any. And so they did of old (Luke xi. 7). On the second flight was my own bedroom. It stood some dozen feet above the floor of the court, running backwards, its farthest wall being the back wall of the house. And now I must briefly describe it. The door, a clumsy but strong one, had an iron lock and key, after the European fashion. The window was an unlatticed square opening, but closed with a strong wooden shutter, which, for more than one reason, I kept so during my stay there. Above the window was a round hole, about a foot in diameter, and another similar in the opposite wall; these served me for windows. In the centre of the room stood my bed. It consisted of, firstly, an iron bedstead. The natives themselves never used bedsteads. They only stretch their bed upon the floor, and, the following morning, generally fold it up and put it on the shelf (*ruksi*) till the evening. Scoffers have laughed at the passage where Jesus commands the sick man to rise, and take up his bed, and walk (John v. 8); conceiving that the beds of all countries were something like our own. It would indeed have been a singular command for the poor fellow, to have to trudge away with mattress, feather-bed, sheets, bedstead, and all on his shoulder; but in Palestine there is no such thing: there the whole affair would be natural, and easily done. My host, however, had known that we Europeans used bedsteads; and on a late visit to Jerusalem, when I first made his acquaintance, he fell in with the said iron bedstead

among the Europeans, and bought it, and it was now at my service. I was extremely glad, of course, to meet with it. I saw at a glance that it was rather old and decrepit, but I was very tender with it, taking great care in getting in every night, lest we should part company before morning; and thus it proved a faithful friend as long as I remained there.

Secondly, on this was placed the usual bedding. It consisted of a mattress, a cotton-wool bed, a sheet, a blanket, a cotton-wool pillow, and a wadded quilt. On the shelf of the window I placed one of my boxes, which served for a dressing-table; and there laid my brush, comb, and et ceteras. On the floor I had a large dish for a washing-basin. But my toilet appeared to my friends as something very strange and superfluous; for they seldom washed themselves, and combing the hair was quite out of the question. But what puzzled them most was my night-dress—that I should change my garments on going to bed. They themselves, like their forefathers, and like most of the Eastern nations at the present day, slept in their clothes (Ex. xxii. 27).

Another short flight of steps led to the roof of the house, which was flat, as all the houses are. The roof had a battlement surrounding it, to prevent any one falling into the street or court (Deut. xxii. 8). This battlement was built of pottery—a kind of round pipe, some twelve or fifteen inches long, and four or five in diameter, similar to those used in this country for drainage. It had somewhat the appearance of a network, or rather a honeycombed wall. It was suffi-

ciently strong for the purpose, but I could easily imagine that it would not be the safest defence after a lapse of years. I am inclined to believe that it was through this kind of battlement Ahaziah fell, when apart from his family in his upper chamber* (2 Kings i. 2)—a chamber similarly situated to the one I shall now describe. This upper room was built on the western side of the roof, and was spacious and airy—in fact, it was the family saloon. The floor was covered with carpet, and along two sides there was placed a divan—a kind of rough wide wooden seat, covered with a cotton-wool seat and pillows. In the side fronting the street were two large windows, almost filling the extent of the wall; and another fronting the space on the roof. These windows were not latticed, but glass ones, a new thing for Nablus. My host had fancied some glass windows in Jerusalem, and was determined to have some for his own upper room. The workmanship was most primitive, and would amuse our glaziers amazingly; but this was of no moment—they rendered the room delightful, a perfect contrast to all the other dark and sombre rooms in the house. In the corner by the door was the place for the smoking apparatus, together with a large jar of water, and cups to drink from.

Last, but not least, it was furnished with a tolerably large square table. The natives never use tables, nor ever feel the need of them. My host, however,

* Or it might have been a wooden balustrade of latticework, such as I saw in many other houses.

knowing that we Europeans have them, and finding this one on sale with the iron bedstead, bought it. What its age might have been, I cannot say—one leg was nearly gone, and the others were following quickly after it; but I was glad to find it there—it gave me no little satisfaction. I took particular care of it, using it as my desk, at which to read and write, and generally to take my meals on; and by tender usage, it served me during my stay.

It is worthy of notice here that this kind of room is a fair representation of the "upper room" of the Old and New Testaments, such an one as that wherein our Saviour and His disciples ate the Passover (Mark xiv. 15), and is still preserved principally for the entertainment of guests who are to be treated with honour, as in the time of the prophet (1 Kings xvii. 19). The modern Arabic name for such a room, in contradistinction to *ardiyeh*, the room on the ground-floor, is *aliyeh*, the Old Testament עֲלִיָּה (*áliyah*), which literally means upper chamber, although translated *parlour* (Judg. iii. 20), *chamber* (1 Kings xvii. 23). The poorer class of houses do not have this kind of room.

This upper room covered the western part of the flat roof of the house, and in front of its door stood the remaining portion, measuring some twenty-five feet long by about twelve wide. It was partly adorned with a variety of flowers, growing in all the luxuriance of an Eastern climate, and used, as in time of old, for many purposes. Friends and visitors frequently sat there to converse and enjoy themselves, or to consult on

private matters (1 Sam. ix. 25, 26). But its most common use by the family was to dry clothes, cotton-wool, &c., as Rahab did in the time of Joshua (Josh. ii. 6). When anything which drew particular attention happened in the street, the inmates ran to the top of the house to view it from thence. I found it extremely convenient as a promenade, especially on showery days, or when too much occupied to go out. Sometimes I found this exercise rather disagreeable. The roof was a lofty one, and overlooked the houses on the opposite side of the street. These were Mohammedan houses; and I knew I could not give a greater offence to their inmates than to observe them. I gave them as little cause of offence as possible; but in spite of this the glances I had of them irritated them not a little; and frequently their little urchins from their roofs in return showered upon me the bitterest cursings, and made the most offensive gestures it is possible to conceive. But I had been trained to this kind of treatment in Jerusalem, my lodgings there happening to be in the midst of Mohammedans. One day, however, I met with a more serious incident: I, with two friends, had gone to the top of a Christian's house, which stood on a high ground in the town, for the purpose of viewing the city and neighbourhood. This house happened to overlook the court of a Mohammedan; and, supposing that we came there for the sake of having a sight of his females, the poor fellow came up to the top of his house quite in a hurry, and confronting us, requested in a most peremptory manner to know what business we

had there. My Christian native friends, accustomed to submit to the taunts and insults of their lordly neighbours, were not a little alarmed, and, humbly replying, told him what our real object was. Then in a most insolent manner he commanded us to go down. This I felt was a little too much, and I could not help retorting that we should go down just when we pleased, and that I would not give him a para to see all the females in Nablus. I would certainly not have stirred for awhile, on purpose to vex him, were it not for the importunity of my friends, who were alarmed by my replies. They feared that the affair would not end here, but we heard nothing further of it.

This brief description of the house will suffice to give the reader a general notion of the houses in Palestine, especially as it is what we may call a middle-class house. Those of the wealthy are much larger and better furnished, whilst those of the poor are much inferior. To describe all the differences would carry us beyond our present limits. There is one feature, however, to which we must refer, as it bears upon an interesting passage in the Gospel narrative, and the more so that we are not aware that any other traveller has happened to notice it. In the Gospel written by Mark we read that a sick man was borne by four men to Jesus: "And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken it up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay" (Mark ii. 4). Now, to our European ideas of houses, this fact seems

to be anything but possible. But not so in Palestine. During my stay in Jerusalem I frequently visited a certain Jewish family. One morning I was asked into a room which I had not previously seen; on entering I saw that the ceiling, instead of being a closed arch, had a large round opening, and, being a fine day, was also uncovered. The sight was quite new to me, and the above passage at once recurred to my mind. I immediately went up to the roof—the steps ascending, of course, from the court—to examine it. It was a round opening, two yards in diameter, and over the centre of the room. It occupied the place where domes are generally made on the roof of rooms. On inquiry I found that it was left thus open during the dry season to admit plenty of fresh air into the room; but when the rainy weather came on, it was covered with a kind of tarpauling. I was now satisfied that our Saviour was at the time in such a room, and that the roof which was uncovered was a temporary one, similar to the above tarpauling. The whole affair, in this light, became perfectly natural and easy.

I shall now introduce my reader to the family; and in so doing, their station in life must be borne in mind. They were what we may call of the middle class in Nablus, neither wealthy nor poor. My host possessed a very good shop in the great bazaar, and dealt largely in flocks of sheep and goats, and had, apparently, a thriving business. His brethren looked upon him as a man of substance and position; and, so far, he was a respectable individual. His house was

well supplied with all that were felt to be the necessaries and comforts of life; and there was all the appearance of his being in easy circumstances. To bear this in mind will enable us to enter more fully into the state of domestic life in Palestine, and to estimate that life as compared with that of our own country.

The family consisted of husband, wife, two sons, and an infant daughter. The husband's name was Abdallah (son of God), but now having a son whose name was Dahud, he had assumed the name of his son *Abu Dahud*, *i. e.* the father of Dahud. This assuming the name of the first-born son is a very peculiar custom among the Arabs. The new name thus adopted is not only used in common parlance, but also on the gravest occasions, and even in legal documents. The custom affects the mother as well: she no longer is known by her maiden name, but as the mother of her first-born son, whatever his name may be. My hostess, therefore, was *Im Dahud*, *i. e.* the mother of Dahud.* My host was thus relieved of a name which was by no means characteristic of him for one that was true and extremely suitable.

Abdallah, for so I shall call him in spite of Dahud, was a big man, six feet high, strongly built and well proportioned; with a full roundish face, good

* The custom goes even further than this. When a man marries, and is not blessed with a son, the public gives him one by courtesy, and then call him by the name of his imagined son. Even unmarried men are sometimes dignified in the same manner. And it is curious to observe that the same custom prevails among the Karens—a barbarous people in Burmah.

nose, and dark large eyes, looking very quiet and rather silly, except when moved with wild passions, a thing which frequently happened. He wore loose blue trousers, or rather pantaloons (*sherivāl*), not unlike knickerbockers, a blue waistcoat (*suderiyeh*), a snuff-coloured jacket, and a large blue turban dotted with small white spots; the wristbands of his plaid calico shirt hung generally lower than his jacket-sleeves. His costume, and especially his turban, became him well, and in appearance he was a truly fine man—in fact, one of the most, if not the most sightly man in Nablus. But he was a downright beetle-head: he had just enough sense to get money and to relate silly stories, but beyond that he had not so much as a hair's breadth. The wife, Im Dahud, was in figure somewhat spare and thin, about the middle height, and better looking than the majority of their women, but not handsome. Among the scores of Arab women I saw, not one was decidedly handsome —not to be compared with the most handsome of British females. But, far to be preferred to beauty, Im Dahud was a very sensible woman, and most industrious. She reminded me frequently of the virtuous woman spoken of so highly by Solomon (Prov. xxxi. 10–31); and certainly, to a very great extent, she deserved the same eulogy. Her dress, like that of females generally, consisted of a kind of full trousers with a skirt over them, and a loose jacket, leaving her arms and neck rather bare. The most peculiar part was the head-dress (*suffa*); it was made

to fit the head, having a small cap underneath, and consisted of a kind of network made of silk, and hanging down over the shoulders, widening as it descended, and almost covering the whole back. This was thickly sprinkled over with small round gold coins, which gave it a most gaudy appearance. They told me that its value amounted to about forty pounds of our money; and, from what I could judge, it seemed to be about the truth. My hostess in Jerusalem had one still more costly. All the females have this head-dress, and wear it continually, whether indoors or out: it is heavy and cumbrous. I have tried it on repeatedly, and must say I would much rather they had the honour of wearing it than myself. Im Dahud, like all other females who can any way afford it, had other rich and expensive dresses kept for grand occasions, the mysteries of which I never put myself to the trouble of studying.

In addition to dress, Im Dahud, like other Eastern females, beautified her person with those colourings so much esteemed in the East, but so little agreeable to our Western taste. Her eyelids were coloured black as jet with what they call *kohl*—a preparation of antimony and soot, or frequently, among the poor, soot only. This is applied with a small silver instrument like a bodkin, being first dipped in water, and then into a box containing the kohl powder, and then carefully drawn along the eyelids. It gives the eyes a peculiar, and to them a most admired, expression. This was an old custom among the women of Palestine, as well as those

of other Eastern countries. Jezebel painted her eyes (as in the margin of the common version), as well as tired her head, to look out at the window (2 Kings ix. 30), as did the women in later times (Jer. iv. 30; Ezek. xxiii. 40). In addition to thus painting her eyes, Im Dahud had, like their women generally, her nails and the tips of her fingers stained red with *henna*. Some stain as well the palms of the hands and soles of the feet. The use of henna was as ancient as that of the kohl, and was practised in Egypt from the remotest ages.*

Im Dahud's indoor costume was all that we have described it. But whenever she went out, she uniformly put on three additional garments: and no female ever appears in the street, nor anywhere else, outside her own house, without them. This out-of-door dress is as ancient as the former. No change has taken place in this, as in other matters, during thousands of years. In the first place, she puts on her feet a pair of loose half-boots, made of morocco. Then a large white sheet, covering herself entirely from head to feet. And lastly, a veil over her face. The last is, of course, to shield her face from the gaze of the male sex. All those worn in Nablus, so far as I noticed, with the exception of one or two, were a kind of dark muslin handkerchief, thin enough for the wearer to see through it, but sufficiently thick and dark to hide her features. To see, for the

* There are two interesting fragments of mummies at the Hartwell Museum, still retaining the henna stain. One is the left hand of a female, with the nails and ends of the fingers stained. The other is the right foot of a female, with the stain on the great toe-nail.

first time, a number of them going together, is a most ridiculous sight. Dragging along their large boots, enveloped in their *izzar* as in a shroud, with the dark ugly veil contrasting so frightfully, they look just like so many owls.*

Dahud, the elder son, was a young man of twenty-one, married of course, and had been so for some years. He was under the middle size, of full habit, dumpy, with a round unmeaning face. He had none of his father's fine appearance, nor any of his mother's good sense; but he had all the folly of his father. If Providence had been a little less kind to him, I fear he would have been a perfect idiot. His wife Haneh—for she was not yet an *Im*, nor likely to be—was a young woman, wanting some three years or more to be out of her teens. She was rather under the middle size, and of somewhat spare habit, neither handsome nor ugly; but very quiet, kind, and affectionate. A more unobtrusive creature never existed.

The younger son, Silman, was a lad of sixteen. He

* Let it here be understood that I have only referred to females who live in the towns. The country women, or Felachin, are differently clad. Their dress consists chiefly of blue-dyed linen, made like long shirts, with shawl girdles around their waists, and their heads covered with coloured handkerchiefs. Their persons are also tattooed, generally, on the forehead, lips, chin, breast, arms, hands, and feet; and the eyelids and brows coloured with kohl. The process of tattooing is a painful one. The skin is first punctured in the required pattern —stars, dots, &c.—and a certain mixture of colouring matter is then rubbed in; and lastly, the place is bound up with a tight bandage. The material most commonly used for this purpose is a preparation of gunpowder, which gives a bluish tinge to the tattooing. But these women never wear the white sheet nor the veil.

also would have been married if he had learnt to read and write. His father had taken it into his head, and quite right too, that Silman should have no wife till he could read. If his father continues steadfast to the rule, I fear Silman will never marry, as his taste was far more for tobacco than for reading. Silman was a handsome lad; rather tall for his age, of slender habit, and excellent face. He had all the good looks of his father, and the graceful bearing of his mother; and, more than all, he possessed much of his mother's good sense. In fact, he was the handsomest youth I met with in Palestine. But he was filthily dirty to the last degree. They were all bad enough in that respect, but Silman excelled them all. I always felt a solicitude lest he should come too near me. He had a thriving colony upon his person, and his continual motions showed that they roved over all the territory; but his head was the capital. One day when he stood rather too near the table, where I was dining, performing his usual actions, my forbearance failed me altogether. "Silman, comb your head! A big fellow like you so filthy!—comb your head, boy, for shame!" His father felt anxious lest he should have a wife before he learnt to read; and I felt anxious lest he should have one before he had learnt to comb his head.

The infant was a little girl, a few months old. What amused me most in regard to her was the manner in which she was dressed. She was bound in swaddling-clothes from head to feet, all tightly covered, and looked just like a little mummy.

Last, but not least, came Warde, the servant-girl. She was about twelve years of age—short, strongly built, and very quick in all her movements. She was more handsome than otherwise; but one could hardly discover her real features because of the smut and dirt that covered her. Her face, hands, feet, clothes, were all alike. She never deigned to wash herself; but, in true Arab style, went on accumulating from day to day, and only enjoying the luxury of a bath every two or three months.

It was interesting to watch their daily conduct; and frequently very amusing, but at other times very painful. Im Dahud went constantly on with her domestic duties, with much quietness and order; now and then, however, lifting her voice, more in mirth than anger; and Haneh always near her, like a faithful and obedient daughter, whose voice was hardly ever heard. But she, also, like all mortals, had her trying moments, expressed more in silence than in language. Dahud spent the day in the shop, but left it now and then to its fate, to pay a visit to household affairs. His presence was always known by his croaking voice, sometimes in loud laughter, and other times in wild passion. Silman was nominally a pupil at the Protestant school, but never did any one play the truant more constantly than he, and found a thousand excuses for his conduct. His great study was tobacco; and whenever he could stealthily enjoy a cigarette, he would joyfully avail himself of the opportunity. He also knew how to be

passionate, and would have often indulged in this way, but that he was somewhat repressed by a guilty conscience for his daily conduct. As for Abdallah, full of spirit, he always made himself heard, whether indoors or out; either cracking jokes, singing, muttering prayers, or in desperate fits of passion, which frequently occurred. On those occasions he lost all control over himself; and his strong deep voice, strained to its utmost, reverberated through the whole place like the roaring of a lion. He sometimes became quite frantic. Even Warde, who was so full of drollery, and so ready with her repartee, would then be as silent as a mouse till the storm had passed away, which it always did quickly. After all, there was underneath all these jarrings and ebullitions of temper a large stratum of good-nature and kindness.

I shall now come to the food. To give a full description of all the Arab dishes would be indeed a tedious task, and quite apart from the object of these pages. I shall, therefore, confine myself to the daily fare of Abdallah's family, only adding one or two other examples for the sake of further illustration. They themselves cared but little for any regular meal till the evening, when the day and all its duties were over: their principal meal was supper. But I had taken with me my British habits. I wanted breakfast, and dinner, and tea, and cared but little for supper. My breakfast consisted generally of bread, milk diluted with hot water, and sugar to sweeten it. The bread was made in the

form of a round cake, about as thick as my hand, of wheat flour coarsely dressed,* rather dark, and frequently sour. It was always baked fresh every morning. They never think of baking enough for the week, nor even for two days at a time—not they, indeed: sufficient for the day is its own duties. These cakes, being ready, were brought up to us in a most primitive style, hot, and tough as leather. The milk was that of goats, the only milk used in the country. The very few cattle they have are never milked, but only used for tilling the ground; not as it was of old (Deut. xxxii. 14; 1 Sam. vi. 7). I thought but very little of Solomon's promise to have goat's milk for food (Prov. xxvii. 27). However nourishing it may be, I found it much too strong; but, diluted with water, and sugar added, I enjoyed it very well. I may here add that they have butter and cheese, made, of course, from goat's milk; but these are more unpalatable than the milk itself, and I preferred the dry bread.†

My dinner consisted of rice, bread, and sour milk. The rice was cooked after their own fashion, and that

* In Nablus, as well as Jerusalem and some other places, they had public mills; but in most country places, and by some families in these towns, the grinding is still performed, as in ancient times, with the hand-mill. These you hear early of a morning, grinding for the family use. It is never performed by the male sex, being too degrading for them, but by the wife or daughter, unless there be a female servant (Isa. xlvii. 1, 2). In Nazareth I saw two—mother and daughter—grinding at the same mill (Matt. xxiv. 41).

† The butter is very much like lard in colour and taste; and the cheese white and hard, like salty chip. The Arabs themselves are very fond of the butter, and those who can afford it eat of it plentifully.

not the best in the world, and rendered yellow with a kind of powder they much admired. The milk was made sour and clotted, and forms a very common concomitant dish throughout the East. It is frequently eaten with bread alone; and renders the rice much more palatable. It was highly esteemed in the East as a refreshment from the earliest times (Gen. xviii. 8).* I may add here that a small quantity of butcher's-meat —mutton or goat—was generally served. They themselves use it very sparingly, and the country people seldom taste it. Nor is it to be very much desired: I cared nothing for it. It is generally poor and tough, and the mode of butchering makes it still more objectionable. The very sight of it on the shambles—thin, flabby, and not too clean, was quite enough; and I felt thankful that I could do well without it. Owing to the warmth of the climate, it is slaughtered and cooked the same day. I had found this out for the first time with my Arab friends at Jerusalem, under somewhat vexatious circumstances. The premises within the outer wall of the house were rather extensive, consisting of a couple of gardens adjoining the court. Along these gardens and court, a young beautiful gazelle skipped about from morning till night; and a more innocent lovely creature was never seen. One morning, as usual, before I had left the house for my rambles, I cultivated her friendship

* The Arabs have distinct terms for the milk in its simple state and when it is curdled; and the same distinction prevails in the Hebrew of the Old Testament: the former is *chalav* (חָלָב), and the latter *chemah* (חֶמְאָה); but this distinction is not observed in the common version.

so far as her timidity would allow; but on my return at dinner-time she was missing, and to my grief I found that the poor little thing had been slaughtered, and cooked for dinner—which made my dish doubly offensive. The only compensation I received for the loss of the gazelle was a vivid illustration of Abraham preparing the calf for his visitors (Gen. xviii. 7).

But to return. My tea went off better. A friend had kindly furnished me with a supply of choice tea before I had left London, which probably I should not have thought of; but now it was most acceptable. I never pay any attention to culinary affairs, nor care what is set before me, provided it be clean and wholesome; but I must confess that I then thought of my tea daily before it came. I had no luxuries at this meal any more than at breakfast and dinner—only the Arab cake, without butter or cheese; but the tea made up for all defects. They themselves had never seen tea before, but soon acquired a taste for it.

My object being to see Arab life in the country, and to lead that life for a while, I submitted, of course, to their mode of living, so far as food, &c., were concerned. The most difficult part of the business was to put up with all the dirt there. I frequently felt that if, according to the old saying, every one eats a peck of dirt during his lifetime, and a peck only, I, for the future of my life, should certainly leave it to others. The only way of getting over it was to shut your eyes as much as possible to this condition of things. Sometimes it became very intolerable when the idea would

suggest itself that perhaps Silman, or some of the others, had been rummaging after his live stock during the cooking process, and——but you had only to banish such thoughts as quickly as possible.

I may mention here that my kind host had procured a few knives and forks also for my use. These were a curious set. One might have thought by their appearance that they had been in use since the time of Noah, only that we know that such articles have been treated with scorn through all ages by the people of Palestine; they only make use of spoons, and even these are used by comparatively few, who have introduced them in modern times. Abdallah thought much of his knives and forks, and I left my own in my box lest I should seem to undervalue his. One day he had the courage to use them, and, placing the knife in his left hand and the spoon in his right, commenced with all possible gravity; but, finding that Yohannah and myself were enjoying the joke, he threw them away with indignation, and never attempted it again.

When evening came, we all sat together at supper, *i. e.* the males—the females serving. In the middle of the room first described, a kind of polygonal stool, about a foot high, was placed. Upon this a large round copper tray was laid, on which stood a large dishful of rice, with, generally, small bits of meat on the surface, and a bowl of clotted milk. The bread was thrown very unceremoniously on the floor—a cake for each guest. A cruse of water was placed by, for any one to drink as he had need.

The table being properly set, we all sat around it on the floor like a band of tailors. The females squatted in their usual corner, and waited upon the guests when necessary. At supper I always conformed to their habit, using only spoon and fingers, and never insulting them with knife and fork.* They did justice to the food at these times. The few meals they took during the day was certainly a sufficient reason for it; but even then they were large eaters. I have seen Dahud, as well as his father, dining with me, and again supping together, and devouring each time enough to support an ordinary eater for a couple of days. Dahud gloried in this manly feat; whenever I mentioned it to him, he would then make even an effort to excel. One day—a fast day of the Greek Church—the priest's wife entered the room, and caught him dining with Yohannah and myself, and upbraided him for his impiety. "Oh!" said he, immediately, and with great humour, "I have been praying to God to excuse my fasting, and my prayer has been answered as you see."

Before we leave the table I may as well add a few words with regard to their drinks. Their general and almost only beverage is water. Of this they drink heartily. I was quite surprised at the quantity of water they consumed during supper. And not only at a repast, but also during the day. The water at Nablus is cer-

* My first experiment in this way of managing my food was some years previous at Safet, in the north of Palestine. I was invited, in company with my Jewish friend, Mr. Hurwitz, to dine with the chief Rabbi, and was there initiated into the Arabic fashion.

tainly good, and very grateful in such a climate; but Abdallah and others drank of it frequently, as if for a wager.* My host and family never drank wine. They had never been trained to it, and it would have been too expensive for their frugal habits. Wine is made in Jerusalem, and in other places by Christians and Jews; but none is made at Nablus, unless stealthily. It is well known that the Mohammedan religion forbids its use; and the Nablusites being such staunch Mussulmans, they neither use it themselves nor allow others to do so. A poor Jewish family had lately removed thither from Jerusalem, and had brought with them a quantity of wine, partly for their own use, but principally to sell to their Jewish friends and Christians. The fact reached the ears of the governor, and some of his officials were sent to seize the unlawful liquid; and all that the family were unable to conceal was taken from them by force—not, however, to be poured out on the ground as an unholy thing, but, as I was assured, to be swallowed by these faithful functionaries themselves. This I could easily believe, from other circumstances that came under my own notice. The vast majority of Mohammedans, nevertheless, are faithful to their Prophet's command. The only strong drink I saw among the Christians in Nablus was *arrack*, of what I suppose would be considered an inferior kind. There were a few, I believe, addicted to this drink, but generally the Christian community were very abstemious. I did not see a single individual amongst them under the influence of drink

* They frequently drink it with coffee, and even with milk.

except on one occasion—an elderly man, who, under the inspiration of arrack, was more loquacious than usual.

The males being satisfied, the tray and its contents were then removed to the female corner, when they in their turn served themselves, whilst the men went on with their smoking and conversation.

One day a friend came and invited me and Yohannah to dine with him outside the city on the following Saturday. I thanked him, and told him that we would hold ourselves in readiness. The inhabitants are very fond of going outside the town to dine, near the fine stream that issues from the mount, on the south-western side of the town. Saturday came, and Yohannah and I went out for a walk to sharpen our appetites. At the appointed time we were on the spot, and could see our host coming, with two other friends, to join us, and two servants following. One of the servants had a large pot on his head full of rice, and the other a large dish in one hand, and a jug with clotted milk in the other. Having arrived at the dining-place, and the pot being taken down, Yohannah was to have the honour of raising the contents out of the pot into the dish. Our host had brought a spoon for the purpose: what its age was I could not imagine. The dinner being rather a grand one, there were choice bits of meat scattered among the rice; and each time a piece presented itself, Yohannah pounced upon it, grasping it with his hand, and then laid it most daintily upon one side of the dish. But before he had finished emptying the

contents of the pot, the spoon broke, causing our host to make a most doleful and indignant face at the loss. But there was no help for it; and Yohannah had now to finish his task with the mere bowl. All being ready—the dish, with its contents, the jug of milk, the cruse of water, and the bread—we sat down, around the dish, upon the grass, if indeed there was any grass at all; and I, being the stranger, was honoured with the bowl of the old spoon to deal with. Before we commenced, our host apologized that he had not a small dish for me. When I went out here and there amongst them to dine or sup, I found they all ate from one dish, but generally a small dish was provided for me as a mark of honour to a stranger. But now there was no small one, and my kind host began to apologize for it. His idea was, of course, that perhaps I did not like to dip my hand in the dish with them. "My good friend," said I, "do not mention it for a moment; I'll do famously with the large one—in fact, I prefer it."

"Oh," said the friend who sat next me on the left hand, "I'll make a place for him!" and with his filthy hands began pressing up the rice, so as to make a separate place for me on the side of the dish.

I stopped him as quickly as I could.

"Oh, no, thank you—thank you; I'll do without a place."

A portion of the clotted milk being poured into the middle of the rice, every one dashed his hand into it, mixing it up to a proper consistency, and then despatched it with the greatest celerity; I following in

their wake as well as I could with the old spoon. I need not add that full justice was done to the contents of the dish; the limpid water and fresh air of the mountain lending their aid to give gusto to our picnic.

A few days after my arrival, I had the pleasure of dining, for the first time, with the Samaritan priest. The table was of the usual style, but better furnished. On the middle stood a dish of rice, with bits of meat imbedded in it. Another dish consisted of vegetable marrows, emptied of the seeds, and stuffed with mincemeat and spices. Another kind of dish was mincemeat and rice rolled up in vine-leaves, looking like small sausages. Lastly, a couple of fowls, with some tidbits, the mysterious contents of which I could not penetrate. Knowing something of our European fashions, Amram had provided one of their small stools for me to sit upon, and, to my surprise, a knife and fork. These were given him by the Rev. Mr. Bowen (afterwards the late lamented Bishop Bowen). His two nephews stood by to serve at the table. Before we had commenced, an individual entered the room very unceremoniously, whom I knew not, but imagined by the manner in which he was received that he was some one of importance. He was Achmad Beek, the governor's head *kawas*. He was under the middle size, but strongly built, with dark, quick, and keen eyes; dressed more after the Turkish fashion, but a native of Nablus. Although a Mohammedan, he was evidently under the effects of strong drink. His actions were quick and abrupt, and he talked very quick and indistinctly.

Taking off his blue jacket, he observed to me, "You Europeans eat with knives and forks, but we Arabs find our fingers to be much more handy." Seating himself at the table, he began, in true Arab style, to devour the viands before him. A more voracious creature I never saw in my life. I could not help glancing at him continually. The amount of the good things present he devoured, and in so short a time, was almost incredible. He seemed like a wild animal. But in spite of all this he managed to talk incessantly. The subject of his conversation was money—who in Nablus was wealthy, who had the largest flock, and was So-and-so of any substance, and so on; plotting, no doubt, in his own mind how to plunder some of the poor wretches. I attempted repeatedly to draw him into conversation with regard to the country—its history, condition, resources, and politics; but with no success: most likely he knew nothing of these things. He drank as freely as he ate. Before he left the table he had emptied two bottles of wine, each about as large as our quart bottle. The rest drank water; but, nothing daunted by that fact, nor by the consideration of his religion, this faithful son of Islam swallowed the forbidden fruit most greedily. When we had well nigh finished the repast, our guest remarked that he was rather minded to let none of it escape; and we wickedly encouraged him to carry out his inclination. At once he plunged his hand into the remaining rice, made a huge ball, and crammed it into his mouth. This drew from the party roars of laughter, with which he seemed

to be much pleased, just as if he had accomplished some wonderful feat. But what gave the finishing stroke to the scene was, when he saw that I had finished, he took up my plate, and picked the bones I had left, one by one, as clean as an elephant's tusk.

Amram, on the other hand, conducted himself with much propriety; and one felt with him almost reconciled to eat with the fingers. Every now and then he would look out for a tidbit, take hold of it with his hand, and then place it on my plate, as a mark of respect to the stranger. The Bedouin manner is to thrust it into one's mouth; but Amram was satisfied with putting it on my plate. It interested me not a little to see the superior manner in which my Samaritan friend managed things; and gave me a vivid idea of our Saviour dipping his hand in the dish with His disciples (Matt. xxvi. 23). The two nephews stood by, one with a cruse of water in his hand, and the other ready to serve according to Amram's words or motions.

Having finished our repast, one of the two held a copper *ibrik*, not unlike a tea-kettle, and poured water over our hands, whilst the other held the towel wherewith to dry them. The same service was done of old by Elisha, to Elijah the prophet (2 Kings iii. 11). I may here observe that I saw no one washing his hands before eating, and but seldom after eating. I felt no objection, of course, to the latter practice, and would have rejoiced to see the former, because their digits were never too clean. The washing hands before eating bread referred to in the Gospel (Matt. xv. 2; Mark vii. 5;

Luke xi. 38) means, not the common washing for the sake of having *clean* hands, but only ceremonial ablution to sanctify the hands—a practice continued by the Jews to this day.

Before we take leave of the table, I may here remark that the people of Palestine are as fond now of feasting as were those of former ages. Just as Adonijah, when conspiring for the throne, made a feast to secure the hearts of his partizans (1 Kings i. 9), so now, nothing is so effectual to gain the same object as a good feast. I was much amused one day by a friend who came to consult how to establish himself in a certain position, and who wound up his scheme with,—"Well," said he, "I will make a good feast." One evening, when discussing religious matters with the priest, in the presence of a large party, he remarked, "These people have no hearts of their own—a good supper will bring them over to Protestantism, and another good supper will bring them back to their own Church again." And from what I had seen of them I had no great reason to doubt the justness of his conclusion.

CHAPTER VI.

VISITORS.

THE people of Nablus, as well as others in Palestine, are rather given to visiting one another—at all events, I found them to be so. There was no lack of these friendly calls. In the evenings especially I found my room generally well filled; and all being very communicative, nothing could have been more interesting to me than such gatherings. My principal object in dwelling amongst them being to become acquainted with their domestic habits, these evening assemblies gave me many excellent opportunities to observe their manners.

When any one entered the room, the common salutation was, "Good evening to you!"* Having taken off his shoes, and seated himself (on the floor of course), the salutation was repeated, accompanied with the lifting of the hand, and touching the breast and forehead, or the lips and forehead. This touching the breast and

* The Jews, all over the world, retain the old formula, *Shalom Alechem*, Peace be to you (Luke x. 5); and the Arabs use the same phrase frequently, as, for example, when they send their compliments to any friend by another, they say, "Give my peace to So-and-so;" and especially on parting, when one says good bye, the response is always "With peace," *i. e.* Go in peace (Exod. iv. 18).

forehead would be repeated again, and perhaps again, according to the attention wished to be paid to the visitor. At first I was a little bewildered at this endless repetition of good manners; but, once being initiated into the habit, I freely indulged in it. I was much amused with some, especially the priest, between whom and myself the kindest feelings existed. And we wished to express our good feelings too, on these as well as other occasions. Having entered and seated himself, he would then turn himself to me, and commence the ceremony. Touching his breast and head, with "Good evening to you," and I, of course, responding, the civility would not end until repeated at least some half-dozen times. When the party happened to have assembled before me, these repetitions being made by most of them, I received and had to give in return some forty or fifty such salutations before the ceremony was finished. When any one entered, having a friend or friends present whom he had not seen for a long time, these would stand and embrace each other, and generally kiss each other too. But their manner of kissing is peculiar. They never kiss the lips, as we Europeans do; but only the cheeks and shoulders. The right cheek is first kissed, then the left, and sometimes the cheeks only; but generally the shoulders also, in the same manner: just as they did in ancient times (Gen. xxxiii. 4; xlv. 14, 15; Luke xv. 20). It is most amusing to see Bedouins especially going through this singular mode of etiquette. During my stay with my Arab friends in

Jerusalem, I had an opportunity of witnessing it. Two Bedouin friends, calling upon my host, happened to meet there one day. Falling upon the neck of each other, in turn they kissed the cheeks and the shoulders, and then asked after the welfare of their families, wishing them peace and prosperity in the name of Allah. This long list of inquiries and blessings being over, they recommenced kissing and embracing, and repeating the very same questions and wishes; and so over and over again, and that with all the sedateness and gravity imaginable. One might easily comprehend such embraces and hugging between two dear relations or lovers, after a long separation; but here there was nothing of the kind—the performance was gone through, apparently at all events, with the most placid gravity and coolness.

The Mohammedan will not generally salute any one but a brother in faith; and frequently when any one of another creed salutes him, ever so kindly, he will receive in return a sound cursing. The same spirit seems to have existed in Palestine in former ages: hence the different conduct enjoined by Christ upon His disciples (Matt. v. 47).

The women kiss each other on all occasions, and carry the habit much further than the men. But between the men and the women very great modesty and decorum are observed. They never kiss each other nor touch each other in public, and are very reserved even in common salutations.

Whenever the priest entered, all the children present

would kiss the back of his hand; as also those adults who happened not to be familiar with him. This they would do in church, or anywhere, when occasion gave the opportunity. The same ceremony was performed with any high person or officer. I had observed the same respect paid to the Jewish Rabbis, who, as well as the Christian priests, expect it from their people. At first I was taken by surprise; but when I fully understood its real import—that it was an act of reverence and submission—I became upon my guard. Lest, however, I should offend my new friends at Nablus, I submitted to it until I had time to explain to them my reasons for refusal. It struck me afterwards that most likely this was the kind of salutation rebuked by our Saviour, which was so ostentatiously sought for by the Pharisees of His time (Matt. xxiii. 7; Mark xii. 38).

When any one entered who was considered to be more honourable than the rest, all present would rise and stand, until he would come forward and be first seated, and then they would resume their own seats. What gave to the scene a peculiar air of novelty was the stately and formal manner in which it was performed, and the contrast of standing with the sitting position—all being seated, tailor-like, on the floor. No people, perhaps, are more observant of these marks of distinction, nor more anxious to obtain them, than the Arabs. A thirst for vain ostentation seems to be deeply ingrained in their nature. I relieved them, as soon as I could, from this pleasant duty of etiquette with regard to myself, and taught them to receive me

as one of themselves. The custom, however, was interesting, and carried one's thoughts back to ancient times, when the same civilities were paid to superiors (Job xxix. 8).

The visitor being duly seated, the first mark of friendship or respect, after salutation, was to hand him a pipe to smoke. It was first well filled with tobacco by the host; or one of the company who was in the act of smoking would hand his own pipe to him, as a token of respect. The pipes mostly in use are the common pipes of the country. They consist of a bowl, made of earthenware coloured red and of a good large size, with a wooden stem four to five feet long, ornamented with a mouth-piece of amber. Some of the stems are covered from the mouth-piece two-thirds of the whole length with silk, attached at both ends by gold thread, and a silk tassel hanging at the lower end. The bowl generally is placed on a small round brass tray, to preserve the matting or carpet, as the case might be, from injury; and also to receive the ashes of the tobacco. A great many used cigarettes, *i. e.* tobacco rolled up in thin paper, made for the purpose, in the form of a cigar. This is a modern innovation, and rather despised by the old orthodox party; but being very handy, a great many seemed to be extremely fond of it. My host had two or three *argeelehs* also, which were in frequent requisition. This instrument consists of a glass vase, filled with water, with a flexible leather tube, varying in length from eight to twelve or more feet, ornamented with an

amber mouth-piece.* The pipe-bowl is placed on the top; and when smoking, the smoke passes through the water, and then enters the tube. The smoke is thus made more agreeable, but the act of smoking the argeeleh requires such exertion of the chest as to render it very prejudicial to health. It is the favourite instrument, notwithstanding, with the better class. The tobacco used in the argeeleh is of a peculiar kind—the *toomback* of Persia. It is first well damped, and then put in the pipe, and burnt by placing one piece or more of live charcoal on the top.

The tobacco in general use is cultivated in the country, and manufactured by themselves. I was told that it is very mild, and of excellent flavour; but being no judge of that article, I cannot pronounce upon its merits. Partly in self-defence, and partly to please them, I made an effort now and then to consume a cigarette; and here and there I occasionally accepted the pipe, and made a show of using it, merely as a matter of politeness. This lesson I was taught for the first time, some years previous, when in Egypt. One day, when visiting a Jewish family in Cairo, the good lady of the house—and one of the most portly of all the daughters of Abraham that I have ever seen—charged the pipe, made a few puffs so as to get it well lit, and then handed it to me. I could not refuse it, of course; and the lesson taught me how to act for the future, with Arab as well as Jewish friends. But these people

* Some argeelehs are very expensive, being of costly materials and richly ornamented.

were most inveterate smokers. I have seen as many as a dozen or more smoking at once in the same room, and each one emitting volumes of smoke which actually prevented us at times from seeing the faces of one another. The only redeeming quality in the affair was, that they never expectorated; and I have no recollection of ever seeing an Arab do so whilst smoking. Some of them were so addicted to smoking that they were hardly ever separated from their pipes, except when in bed; and some of them even then, I was told, indulged themselves with the pipe. Many carry their pipes and tobacco with them wherever they go. The pipe they carry in their hand (or, in the case of people of position, it is carried behind them by a servant); and the tobacco for their present use they carry in a little bag made of silk or shawl-stuff, &c., put into their bosom,* frequently accompanied with a small pouch, containing flint, steel, and tinder. The latter are now rapidly falling into disuse, by the introduction of lucifers. These, and the cigarettes, they find to be extremely convenient. One day, having hired a couple of horses for Yohannah and myself, a lad of about fourteen years of age came to look after them.

* The bosom is generally used as a pocket. The loose robes, being tied around the waist with a girdle, admit a large quantity of things. When common things are bought in the market, they are crammed into the bosom, which was the custom in early times (Luke vi. 38). The Felachin and Bedouin Arabs continue to use the old leathern girdle, having in it small pockets, in which they carefully deposit their coins; just as it was in the time of our Saviour, who said, "Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses"—ζωνας, lit., girdles (Matt. x. 9).

When, at lunch, we offered some to our young Mussulman, he would not accept it, but looked dejected and sullen. On further inquiry, we found he had lost his tobacco—"I wish," said he, "I had lost all my clothes instead." But we could not assist him out of his dilemma, neither of us having tobacco with us—I having never formed the habit of using it, and Yohannah having left it off.

Next after the pipe came the coffee. They indulge themselves very much in drinking this beverage. Every one who can afford it sips a cup many times during the day. No visitor, therefore, to whom any respect is to be shown is neglected. The berry, when well roasted and pounded, is put to simmer over a slow fire, and the coffee is then brought in, thick and strong, without milk or sugar. The cup (*finjan*) is a tiny thing, just about the shape and size of half a common egg. Being without a handle, it is placed in another cup (*zarf*), which very much resembles an egg-cup, made of silver or brass, according to the circumstances of the owner. My host had some of both kinds. Some of these, possessed by the wealthy, are very beautiful and costly. The cup of coffee is brought forward on a small tray; and when it is drunk, the individual, returning the cup, slightly inclines his head, and touching his forehead with the right hand, salutes the host, who, in return, does the same to the visitor.

My host indulged but little in lemonade and sweetmeats. I only saw these luxuries on one occasion, which I shall yet mention; but elsewhere I was fre-

quently regaled with them. The lemonade, as made by the natives, is most delicious. That which I had at Damascus, cooled with the snow of Lebanon, was one of the most grateful and refreshing drinks conceivable.

CHAPTER VII.

DEATH AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

I HAD not been long with my new friends when Im Dahud died, and that under very distressing circumstances. One evening they made a feast in honour of myself, and had invited a dozen or more of their best friends. Food, tobacco, and coffee were in abundance, but no wine nor intoxicating drink. Every one present seemed to have enjoyed himself thoroughly; and all, as I supposed, had passed off most agreeably. I retired before the company had broken up; and left them in the enjoyment of warm but kindly conversation, and enveloped in clouds of tobacco smoke. Next morning Yohannah informed me that some angry words had passed between Abdallah and his wife after I had left. A poor fellow—idiotic, but very innocent—a relation of Abdallah, had invited himself to the feast, and taken his place at the table. This was no little provocation to our host; so he gave vent to his anger when the guests were gone. Im Dahud replying, "Pooh! never mind; we all know the poor fellow!" this only enraged Abdallah the more; and, in one of his most violent fits of passion, he cursed her, and her

mother, with a long list of her relations and friends, as the Arabs do. We were in the hopes, however, that "balmy sleep" had restored peace and good feeling. Not so; his fierce conduct had now wounded her heart deeper than ever. Soon after, when I was busily occupied in the saloon, Yohannah came up in great excitement, and told me that Im Dahud was very ill, and that he feared she had taken poison; but advised me on no account to go down, lest the Mohammedans should try to fix her death upon me. She had all the symptoms of one having been poisoned. I sent him down to seek and administer anything which they happened to have that would act as an emetic, but her friends would allow nothing to be given her. They were prevailed upon to send for a doctor, an Arab, who sent his son, a lad of fifteen. Yohannah, being moved at this, indignantly dismissed him, and requested that his father should come immediately. In a very short time the barber-doctor entered; and having glanced at his patient, took from her arm a quantity of blood, gave her two pinches of snuff, and, withdrawing, oracularly pronounced that she would be all right very soon. But Yohannah had courage enough to tell him to his face, "No; what you have now done is not worth a pin!" And so it was; the poor woman was dying; and in a few minutes longer I was requested, in all haste, to go down to pray with her. I went, of course; and saw in a moment that she was breathing her last. But such a scene I had never witnessed before. The room was crowded with her nearest relations and friends, most

of whom were frantic with grief. Her brother supported her, and the rest were clustering around her, enough to suffocate the poor creature; lifting up their hands, and bursting out in agonizing shrieks, peculiar to their people. The sight was, in fact, indescribable; and one of the most heartrending a man could well witness. I begged of them to move out, and give her a little breathing room, but my voice was heard to very little purpose: nothing could induce them to withdraw. But she had already died in the midst of the tumult. Abdallah was pacing the court like one distracted; the guilt of his conduct on the previous evening almost driving him mad. Muttering to himself, "Why should she do so? I didn't beat her last night! I have done so, but she always forgave me. Why should she not do so now?" Poor fellow! I could not help pitying him. But there was one to be pitied more than all the rest—her mother; a small, elderly, but very interesting woman, always pleasant, and full of kindness. How she clung to her poor daughter—long after she had expired—beating her own bosom, and lifting up her voice in wild shrieks, quite bewildered! The whole scene gave me a very vivid idea of the ruler of the synagogue's house of old, when his damsel had died (Mark v. 38).

Im Dahud had breathed her last about eleven o'clock in the morning; and by three o'clock in the afternoon her funeral took place. Burying the dead on the same day that they die was now to me a common thing; but I felt a little surprised and annoyed that my kind hostess

should be so quickly removed. I very much respected her, and mingled with them for her my grief and tears; and I felt a strong wish that she should not be buried till the latest possible hour. In fact, I had no idea that it would have been otherwise. At three o'clock, however, I found that the friends had assembled, and everything was ready, awaiting me to join the procession. The dead body was simply shrouded in white clean calico, without any coffin, and laid upon the bier. This was not unlike our own, only of very primitive make, with a kind of low gallery round it, to prevent the body from falling over by any accident. We went along in a kind of procession, the females walking in front of the corpse. In Mohammedan funerals there are generally hired mourners, who chant their monotonous solemn dirge, "*La illah illa Allah! w'Muhammedhu russul Allah!*" (No god but God! and Mohammed is the prophet of God!) repeating it continually till they reach the place of interment; whilst the female hired mourners perform their frantic wailing at the house. And so were these hired mourners employed of old (Jer. ix. 17, 18; Amos v. 16). But here there was no need of those skilful in lamentation and wailing; nature taught the females present to pour out their simple dirges in most melancholy tones. I could not help noticing that all present seemed to be in their dishabille, the family not excepted; they had come from their various occupations, just as they were, without any change of clothing. Having reached the Greek church, the priest, with much solemnity, per-

formed the service in the native (Arabic) language, during which a large candle was placed at the head of the corpse, and two smaller ones at the feet. A picture of the Virgin Mary was also laid on the bosom. The service being over, the nearest relations stepped forward to take their last farewell of their departed one, and amongst them the poor idiot fellow, weeping and sobbing most piteously. To see him and Dahud, especially, kissing their best friend for the last time, was a most touching sight; it was enough to move the strongest heart. We then proceeded to the Christian burying-ground, on the western side of the city. The grave was not finished, and we had to wait its completion. After all, it was found to be too short to admit the corpse; and, instead of extending it, they began opening another. I forgot to ask the reason for this; in fact, I took very little notice of it at the time, being more engaged in trying to comfort the bereaved. Another singular thing I noticed was, that they had no shovel nor mattock wherewith to dig, but only used their hands and stones. Whilst they were thus preparing the grave, I was told that the body was still quite warm; and, on placing my hand on the chest, I found it to be so. I had felt anxious and sad all the while, lest they were hurrying her to the grave whilst life still lingered. Knowing that there was a Turkish doctor connected with the garrison, and that he had partly received a European education, I was determined she should not be interred till he should have examined her. I sent Yohannah forthwith to request him to come;

but, unfortunately, he was out of town. His assistant, however, came; and, after a short examination, pronounced life to be extinct. Whilst awaiting his arrival, we were in a state of intense suspense. The females were lifting up their hands and voices towards heaven, commingling their prayers and hopes that she was still alive, and Abdallah announced that, if she were restored, he would kill ten sheep for the poor, and distribute a thousand piastres. But now, the decision being given, there was nothing to be done but to commit her to her long resting-place, although I still had my fears. The grave was only some two feet deep, the bottom surrounded with a rough wall of loose stones, just deep enough to cover the body. When the corpse was lowered into it, stones of sufficient size were placed across, resting upon these walls, and thus defending the corpse from being bruised by the small stones and earth, doing the service of a coffin. Abdallah, now speaking to the dead, repeated what he had already said in the house and in the church, that if she had injured him in any way during her lifetime, he fully forgave her; and begged her to forgive him all his misconduct. The service being over, most of the male friends present came up to Abdallah and the two sons, and gave them kisses of condolence.

On our return from the grave, the priest and myself conversed regarding the burial service, especially the praying for the dead. I told him very freely my own opinion, in which, to my great surprised, he fully acquiesced; and yet he had just done

that service, and would yet repeat it on the third, the ninth, and the fortieth days.

I never realized the picture drawn by the Psalmist of the frailty of human life before so much as on retiring that evening. "In the morning they are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth, and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down, and withereth" (Ps. xc. 5, 6). And so with poor Im Dahud. The previous evening she was with us full of pleasant mirth, but now numbered with the dead.

The females—a dozen or more—remained all night at Abdallah's, almost continually lifting up their voices in mournful lamentations. Early the next morning they went out to the grave to sit there and weep (John xi. 31). This they did for nine successive days.

In the afternoon of the following day I went to church, to witness the ceremony of offerings for the dead. At the end of the service, which lasted about half an hour, a large dish filled with wheat was laid upon the middle of the floor, with a large loaf of bread, having a burning candle stuck in the top. The priest, having pronounced a blessing over them, gave a handful of the wheat to each of the few bystanders, and retained the rest for himself, according to the law of his Church. The ceremony was repeated six times during the first forty days after the burial—and especially on the fortieth, this being the last day of all their duties for the dead, on which it is believed the body has decayed, and the spirit forsaken it.

This is also the day for the dish of condolence; it is a kind of sweetmeat, called *knafe*, consisting of a mixture of vermicelli, sugar, butter, almonds, and spices: this was a very choice but rare dish with my host. On this occasion, however, it was especially used. To do me all the honour in his power, Abdallah, during the morning, called me to witness them making the knafe, and to have a share in the pleasure of mixing it, with which, of course, I complied. When sufficiently baked, it was taken to the grave and there eaten, whether for their own satisfaction or in honour to the dead I could not very well decide, because grief had certainly ceased from Abdallah.

The days of mourning being over, a dispute arose between the two families concerning the deceased's property. The law among the Arabs on this point is a very peculiar one. All that she possessed in her maidenhood in the way of clothing and trinkets, &c., belongs by right to her; and all apparel, including all kinds of personal adornments, which she receives from her husband during her marriage state, also belongs to her: but nothing else. Should the husband die before the wife, everything is taken from her by his family, excepting her apparel. This is one reason —and a very sound one too—why the Arab women are so anxious to possess as much costly apparel as possible. On the other hand, when she dies, and if her parents survive her, one third of her property is claimed by them, whilst the remaining two thirds are

divided between the husband and children. This claim was now brought by Im Dahud's mother against Abdallah; and in deciding what really belonged to her and what was the true value, a serious dispute arose, which grew to a most angry contention. However, an evening was appointed to decide the question; and all met, some dozen or more, in my saloon. I sat with them, by their request, not to take any part in the discussion, but merely to watch the proceedings, and, if possible, to keep a little order. Whilst they were regaling themselves with tobacco and coffee, Girius Mazbar, the head of the Greek community, related an anecdote about the late Tanoos, who had been the head of the Protestants at Nablus. His principal object in doing so, I supposed, was to give me a further insight into the character of the people. He said that on the day following the death of Tanoos, he met two Mohammedans at the gate of the city, going to the dead man's grave. "Why," said he, "should you go to his grave, he being a Christian?" "No," was the reply, "he was not a Christian: he confessed before his death that there is but one God, and that Mohammed is his prophet; and if we had known this in time, we should have prevented the Christians burying him in their cemetery. My brother" (referring to one of the two) "saw last night in his dream four men removing him from your burying-place to ours; and if you were to open his grave, you would find my story to be true."

They went and kissed his grave, and doing so, according to the superstition, they kissed him as their brother in faith. The grave, however, was not opened, and the circumstance still remained a mystery. The man had led such a deceitful life that no one felt any confidence in his profession, whether he was at heart a Christian or a Mohammedan.

In the meantime Dahud had brought in all his mother's apparel, and laid it on the floor. Before commencing the discussion, I proposed that the priest should act as chairman, and see that only one should speak at a time. To this they consented, but soon forgot it, chairman and all, and a most clamorous dispute ensued. Abdallah asserted that a portion of the apparel (laying it on one side) belonged to his mother; that he had given it to his wife merely to use, and not to possess; and that she had also given it to Dahud's wife in the same manner. Whether this were the real fact I could not very well satisfy myself: much less did it satisfy the opposite party. Witnesses, however, were called in who endorsed Abdallah's statement; and however unsatisfactory the whole case appeared to be, it settled this part of the proceedings. Up to this point the dispute had been sufficiently noisy; but now it grew fiercer and fiercer. Girius Mazbar evidently sided all through with the family of Im Dahud, whether from conscientious motives or through the influence of bribery I cannot say; and being more

self-possessed than the rest, had frequently the better of the argument. The priest rebutted him most violently, and frequently with very happy hits; but in fairly arguing the points, Yohannah only was able to cope with him.

The most valuable portion by far of the apparel was now removed, and the remainder, which virtually belonged to Im Dahud, according to the story of Abdallah and his witnesses, was eventually valued, which amounted to 3600 piastres. 1200 were given to her mother; 900 to Abdallah; 600 to Dahud; 600 to Silman; and 300 to the infant, being a little girl—the females only receiving half the amount which the males have. Out of the above, fifty piastres were to be given to the Church, and fifty to the priest.

The business was not settled till a late hour. None of them, however, seemed to be tired. They had wreaked their vengeance in the most unmerciful manner on the tobacco during the whole debate: I never saw such smoking. There was one very peculiar trait of Arab character brought out, which I had not noticed before—a trait which contrasted most singularly with their vociferous talk and outbursts of passion. When any one wished to reply to another, unless already talking to him, he would first name him, and then say, "*Maseekum bil cher*" (Good evening to you), and would repeat it over and over again till the individual would reply, "*Maseekum*"; never proceeding with his argument until thus allowed by his opponent. The

gentlemanly manner in which this was done contrasted most strangely with the fiery speech that followed. Before separating, a deed of settlement was drawn up, to which several present and myself attached our names as witnesses; without which Abdallah and his family would be liable to a demand for the amount till the third generation, when all claims would cease.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABDALLAH'S SECOND MARRIAGE.

THE burying of one wife and the marrying of another generally follow each other rather quickly among the Arabs, if the widower be in circumstances which enable him to carry out the custom of his people. And so it was with Abdallah. The very evening of his wife's death and burial the subject was broached, and no fewer than eight females were recommended to his notice. But it is right that I should add that, so far as I could judge, he himself had no taste for the subject that evening. Not many days, however, had passed before he was able to enter into it with all his heart. His principal confidant and adviser was the priest. Indeed, the subject belongs to that functionary; and he pretty well manages all the match-making among his community. The fathers go to him to give an account of the beauty and virtue of their daughters; and the young men as well as widowers consult him in the choice of wives. In this manner he becomes a perfect adept in the female politics of his people. But this match-making business exposes him to the danger of soiling his hands with bribes; and I fear they are

not always kept clean. Abdallah had already consulted him about having a wife for Silman, although the lad had as yet made no progress in reading and writing. I looked at that business more in the light of putting in the wedge for himself; and, a few days after, he made no secret of it. In fact, he had become quite inflamed upon the subject. His love had not yet centred upon any individual, but he was determined to marry a young wife, not more than twelve years old. Yohannah and another, in fun, called his attention to a young widow in Jerusalem, and her recommendations with regard to beauty and property quite enraptured him. The plan to obtain her was concocted, and during Easter Week he was to come up to Jerusalem to carry it into execution. But before Easter Week came, he fell desperately in love with another young girl of thirteen. There was no little difficulty, however, in the way to obtain his object. She was already betrothed to a son of the late priest—a lad of eighteen, who had been hitherto unable to save up enough money to marry her, although he loved her as his own soul. The betrothal document had been drawn up and signed three years ago, and it contained an agreement that, should any one of the parties refuse the other, 4000 piastres should be paid for the breach of promise. The young woman's father was now dead, and she was under the guardianship of her grandfather. Abdallah soon got his consent, and before I had left for Jerusalem to witness the Easter Week ceremonies, Abdallah, through the co-operation of the priest, was in a fair way of attain-

ing his object. I lectured both priest and Abdallah on the wickedness of trying to get one that was virtually the wife of another; but to no effect. The following week, in spite of the young man's grief and protestation, the prize was secured. On my return from Jerusalem, in about five weeks, I found Abdallah full of joy with his new wife—a tall, handsome, and graceful young woman. I had not seen her before. She was certainly superior in her appearance to any one I had yet seen in Nablus. He was evidently anxious for my approbation; and the moment she entered the room, in his innocent and silly manner he asked me how I liked her. "Extremely well," was the reply; "she is very handsome; and I hope and trust you will live together very happily." Lifting up his big eyes towards heaven, in true Arab style, he added the usual ejaculation, "*Khamdu lillah!*" (Praise be to God!)

I felt a good deal of curiosity to witness a marriage in the Greek church, having seen the ceremony performed in most of the other communities, both Jewish and Christian; but none took place during my stay in Nablus. One marriage was celebrated, but only privately, on account of recent deaths in the family. It was the marriage of a son of the late priest, and brother to the above unfortunate young man. I was invited to witness the ceremony, and accepted it of course. The men, about a dozen in number, sat together in one room, and had kindly provided a seat for me; but I could hardly distinguish the company through the cloud of tobacco smoke that enveloped them. The women

sat together in another room. When the priest and all had regaled themselves sufficiently with tobacco and coffee, the bride and two female attendants were brought in, dressed in their gayest attire. During the ceremony, which was performed in the native language, the marriage ring was placed on the bride's head, and held there for a while by the bridesmaid; and again on the bridegroom's head, the groomsman doing the same service for him. The bracelets which were presented by the bridegroom to his bride were also used in a similar manner. The young couple were then instructed to link the little finger of the right hand; and during the ceremony, the priest slightly bumped their heads together, to signify, I suppose, that they were now united, and should never get to loggerheads again. The ceremony being over, the young couple continued to live as before for nearly a month. But when the day for consummating the marriage arrived, about four o'clock in the afternoon the bridegroom invited a number of friends to a dinner, and the father of the bride invited a party of his friends to a dinner at his house. Before dusk, the bridegroom's party formed themselves into a procession, to fetch the young wife to her husband's house, her own future home. Here a regular feast had been prepared for the whole party, which, but for the mourning circumstances of the family, would have been accompanied with music and other amusements. On these occasions they generally put on their best apparel, and the females especially bedeck themselves with all their ornaments. And

this custom seems to have been strictly observed in ancient times (Matt. xxii. 11).

The procession for conducting the bride to her husband's house is not now performed by the Christians of Nablus after sunset, when lanterns or torches would be required, and does not therefore present a faithful picture of the whole ceremony as given in the New Testament (Matt. xxv. 1–6); their oppressed state has interdicted them now for ages past from displaying some observances still preserved in other parts of Palestine. But there is much more show in the weddings performed in the church than in the one just narrated. These night processions I witnessed repeatedly among the Mohammedans of the town: the large flaring torches, with drums and music mixing with shrill voices, creating no little stir.

CHAPTER IX.

TRAITS OF CHARACTER.

YOHANNAH and I frequently discussed the character of his nation. Sometimes others would join us; and several times did they fully admit the whole catalogue of the national vices—not, however, to grieve over it, but rather to excuse themselves. I have no recollection of one instance when the winding-up of our conversation was not thus:—"Well, you must forgive us: it is in the nature of the Arab to do so." A minute and faithful daguerreotype of their life would form a sad picture. But here I should also say that it would not be confined to any class or creed; nor even to the Arab people. At all events, the shade of difference would be very slight. The whole people of Palestine, and of the East generally, are very much alike. I shall now name the general traits of character which I noticed whilst amongst them.

1. The first and most prominent is the love of money. It is sometimes said that Mammon is only worshipped in commercial countries; but this is a great mistake—he is a universal god. He has too many

devotees at home; but no one of the human race seems more devoutly in his service than the Arab. To obtain money, he will work (but not too hard), and beg, and lie, and pilfer—in fact, he will do anything and everything; and never did the eyes of a Jew or Gentile glisten more brightly when receiving the idol coin than do his. The expectation of a gift (*baksheesh*) is universal; from the governor to the professional beggar, every one you look upon expects it from you; and if you make any purchases, overreaching, of course, is the universal rule. One must calculate upon paying three or four times the real value. Even those you know, and with whom you have become acquainted and friendly, will treat you in the same way. On many occasions, when Yohannah had made purchases in the bazaars, and when it was found out that they were not for himself but for me, he was scouted and cursed even by our most intimate friends, because he had bought them at their usual value. Nor would they care to conceal it from me, but would tell me, now and then, that we Europeans had plenty of money, and that it was only right that they should have a little of it. Nor were they much better to one another. I have seen them many a time, the buyer dodging for a while, disputing the price, wrangling, cursing, and spitting at the seller, and even attempting to force the sale at his own price. So deep is the love of money that honourable transactions are all but unknown amongst them. And how graphically does the state of society amongst them illustrate and confirm the Apostle's

words—"for the root of all kinds of evil is the love of money!" * (1 Tim. vi. 10.)

2. Another trait, quite as common, is their untruthfulness. There is no depending upon any one; nor can you believe any story unless you have some evidence besides the bare testimony of the narrator. Nor are they ashamed of it: they seem to be lost to every sense of truth. When it happens that you have detected one of them in his lies, he never feels confounded nor humiliated, but simply excuses himself as being an Arab. Indeed, those from whom one might have expected better things, and who, I had hoped, were to some extent exceptions, I found more than once sheltering themselves under the false coverlet that they were Arabs. They took it as a matter of course that it was not right for us Europeans to tell falsehoods; but as for them, as Arabs they were at liberty to say just what they liked. Even the Protestants are infected with the same leprosy. One day, after a long conversation with a number of them in my room, I happened to make some entries in my journal before they had all withdrawn. In a day or two it was rumoured that I had written to England to defame the Bishop of Jerusalem. I was told who the author of the story was, and, when I next met him, I demanded how he came to say such a thing.

"Well, sir," was the reply, "I saw you writing, and thought you were going to send home the things that were said."

* Dr. Turnbull's translation.

"Yes; but you ought not to do so—to charge me with a thing I never intended!"

"Well, sir," was the rejoinder, "it is our nature as Arabs to tell untruths, and I hope God will give us a better nature."

3. Another trait is deceit. There is no integrity—no honesty of conduct among them. Their standard of morality on this point is extremely low, or rather, is lost altogether. Old and young, master and servant, parents and children, are just on a level: none, seemingly, have any sense of right and wrong. Honesty has left the country. It is quite as bad now, I believe, as it was in the time of the Psalmist, when he said of his people, "They speak vanity every one with his neighbour: with flattering lips and with a double heart do they speak" (Ps. xii. 2). A Jewish friend, a rabbi in Jerusalem, when discussing with me one day the moral state of his own community, said, "I'll tell you our state in a few words. We are exactly in the state our forefathers were in the time of Jeremiah—'Take ye heed every one of his neighbour (or friend), and trust ye not in any brother: for every brother will utterly supplant, and every neighbour will walk with slanders. And they will deceive every one his neighbour, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit' (Jer. ix. 4–6). And well did he speak; for a more correct picture of the present state of society amongst the whole of the inhabitants could not be drawn."

When this state of morals has revealed itself to any one whilst yet amongst them, things become every now and then unpleasant and embarrassing: one hardly knows how to act. Frequently you know well enough that all their professions of friendship, and so forth, are mere bosh. When, for example, you are received into a house with a strain of eloquence: "You are my son, this house is yours, and everything in it is at your command;" or in the bazaar, when you are accosted with, "Take what you like: all is yours," and afterwards three or four times the value will be exacted from you; upon all such occasions, you know how to act; but not so upon others: because the Arab is singularly capable of concealing his deceit. Should you accuse one of a dishonest action, he will immediately not only defend himself, but also condemn all kinds of dishonesty, using the most eloquent language and stirring action. And, moreover, all this is done with a concealment of the real feelings that is quite astounding. Not a lineament moves to betray the inward man—not a twitch of the muscles moves his countenance as an index to his conscience. And how can it? There is no conscience: that has been seared through deceit from childhood.

What astonished me most of all, and amused me not a little, was the manner in which they deceive, or, at least, attempt to deceive, one another. That they should make hollow professions to strangers is not to be wondered at; but that they should treat each other in the same way is most unaccountable: yet so it is. The

Arab will make the most liberal profession to his brethren, and seal it with an oath in the name of Allah (God). But he will do it as a matter of course, not only in spite of knowing it himself to be a lie, but also knowing well enough that his friend is conscious of the same fact. And so they go on through life. No one trusteth his friend, nor putteth any confidence in a guide; but even keepeth the doors of his mouth from her that lieth in his bosom (Micah vii. 5). Nor was it much better when Christianity was first preached among them. "Wherefore," saith the Apostle, "putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another" (Eph. iv. 25). And again, "Lie not one to another" (Col. iii. 9). This, however, is a hard task to the Arab, "until God," as Girius said, "shall give them a better nature."

One day a man was passing along the streets, announcing in a loud tone that he had found a lost overdress (*aba*), and whoever had lost it might come to him for it.

"There," said I to Yohannah—"there is one honest Arab!"

"Ah, sir!" said he, "it is all deceit. If any one were to go and claim it, the man would curse, and swear that it was not his, and would never give it up. He only makes a show of honesty, but does not mean it: and so are all these people."

4. As a matter of course, from what has been said, the people are extremely irreligious. There is no country in the world with a greater show of religion in

some form or other; but there is no country with less religious sincerity. By their language, you might suppose them to be the most God-fearing people in existence. What you hear from morning till evening, and on all occasions, is "Praised be God!" (*alhhamdu lillâh,*) "Thank God!" (*alhamed lillâh,*) "Please God!" (*anshallâh,*) and such like; but in their mouths these are words without meaning. Even when you ask a person how he is, it may be that the reply will be to the effect, "Praised be God! I am praying for you." And never are they more eloquent than when defining the duties one man owes to his fellow, as a matter of religion. In fact, their hypocrisy becomes unbearable. If they never mentioned religion at all, their deceit would not be so offensive. But no: they must put on the sacred garment on every occasion, although too thin to hide the deformity of their character. My host would frequently pass the door of my bedroom early of a morning muttering his prayer, to show off his deep piety; although he knew well enough, and ought to have known that I knew it too, that he had not a shadow of piety about him. The next moment, perhaps, he would be in a passion, cursing all around him. And this leads me to remark, that there is nothing more shocking in their character than the universal habit of cursing. They all seem as if they had imbibed it with their mothers' milk. They use it on the most trifling provocations, and in the most offensive forms. With the Arab, it is not enough to curse the individual, but he must also curse his father and grandfather, as well as his

children; and, when the chain is finished, the closing curse will be that of his religion. Children even thus curse their parents, especially their mother; and husbands their wives. Few were more free among the non-Mohammedan community in this vulgar and ungodly language than my host at Nablus. Cursing his wife, with all her relations, was an every-day affair. One day I noticed a passionate quarrel between him and his sister, when he used the most blasphemous language—cursing her, her husband and child, and father and mother, and religion, with a *finale* too horrible to mention. But when the Arab turns from his wife to his mare, the scene becomes amusing. The beast never shares in the blows which he so freely awards to his wife; only in the violent language. The poor animal is taunted with the ill fame of its father and mother; is spat upon; and the tirade winds up with a prayer that all its offspring may be females.

Other traits may be named—cruelty, for example, which is very common towards man and beast. And especially vainglory. This is most prominent, and frequently exhibits itself most amusingly. The Diatrepheses are numerous enough in all countries, but nowhere do they abound more than in Palestine. Never was the Apostle's advice more needed than at present—"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves" (Phil. ii. 3).

The Arabs, notwithstanding, have some redeeming qualities. There is a gentleness of manner strangely

mixed with their character, not found among persons of the same class in Europe; and, when their confidence is won, they exhibit no little kindness and hospitality. No one can fail to observe their sobriety; and in this they give an example most worthy to be followed. "When God," as Girius said, "shall give them a better nature," the Arabs will be a fine race of people.

PART II.—THE MODERN SAMARITANS.

INTRODUCTION.

THE origin of the Samaritans is briefly told in 2 Kings xvii. In that narrative we are informed that Salmaneser, after the captivity of the Ten Tribes, transplanted colonists from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim into the cities of Samaria. These people eventually intermixed with the comparatively few Jews who were left in the country. This mixture formed the nucleus of the Samaritan nation. The majority being ignorant of the Jewish worship and ceremonies, one of the captive priests was sent back to his country to teach the new inhabitants how to worship the God of Israel. This priest took up his residence in Bethel, the ancient sanctuary of the Israelites.

When Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed, and Judah carried into captivity—some hundred and thirty years after the above event—we find that some of these Samaritans, residents of Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria, full of grief for the misfortune of their brethren, were treacherously slain by Ishmael

while on their way to the house of the Lord with incense and offerings (Jer. xli. 4–8).

At the time of the return from Babylon, it is evident the Samaritans practised the Jewish religion, and would have joined the Jews in rebuilding their Temple. Their words were these:—"Let us build with you: for we seek your God, as ye do; and we do sacrifice unto him since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither" (Ezra iv. 2). This offer was given perhaps more from political than from religious motives; and whether it were an expression of the sympathy of the people, or a mere intrigue of their chiefs, it is difficult to determine. At all events, it was refused. "Ye have nothing to do with us to build an house unto our God," was the reply; "but we ourselves together will build unto the Lord God of Israel, as king Cyrus the king of Persia hath commanded us" (ver. 3). Subsequently, in the time of Nehemiah, the most determined opposition was offered to the Jews by Sanballat, who was connected in some way or another with the Samaritans; but evidently more on political than religious grounds. This Sanballat was by birth a Horonite, from beyond the Jordan (Neh. ii. 10); and in all probability was appointed governor over the Samaritans, although the fact is not stated in the sacred record. During Nehemiah's absence in Persia, a son of Joiada, the high priest, was married to a daughter of Sanballat, and subsequently, on account of his marriage, was expelled by Nehemiah (xiii. 28).

Josephus, in his Antiquities of the Jews (xi. 7, 8), gives a similar story. His version is this:—That Manasseh, the son of John the high priest, had married Nicaso, daughter of Sanballat, governor of the Samaritans; and to prevent Manasseh divorcing his daughter, Sanballat built a temple on Mount Gerizim, and placed there his son-in-law as high priest. And this, according to Josephus, was the origin of the Samaritan service on Mount Gerizim.

This version of the historian is generally accepted as a faithful narrative of the events briefly mentioned by Nehemiah; but this seems quite untenable—it must either refer to circumstances which happened some hundred and twenty years later than the time of Nehemiah, or it is given in such a way as destroys all confidence in it. According to our author, the event took place in the time of Darius Codomannus, and not Darius Nothus of Nehemiah's time. His Sanballat is not a Horonite, but a Cuthite; and the high priest is not Joiada and his son, but John and his son Manasseh. If, therefore, Josephus has given us in this instance a correct narrative of facts, there must have been two Sanballats, whose daughters had married sons of the then high priests at Jerusalem, and whose sons-in-law were eventually banished. That two such events, so very similar in all their circumstances, should have occurred within about a hundred and twenty years, is not impossible, though improbable; and what makes it more so is, that Josephus has not mentioned a former Sanballat in the time of

Nehemiah. It is evident that his Sanballat cannot be removed back to the time of Nehemiah: the chronology of the whole chapter forbids it. The only conclusion therefore is, that he, through some negligence or other, left out Sanballat and his doings at the proper place, but introduced him according to the version of the vague and unchronological traditions of his people.

Such, briefly, is the sacred account of the origin of the Samaritan people and their worship. They themselves, however, give us a very different version. They hold that they are the only pure and unmixed children of Israel—the sons of Joseph, who have dwelt, through all their past history since the conquest, in the mountains of Ephraim; that the Jews, on the other hand, ever since the captivity, are beyond all doubt a mixed people: and that they have tampered with the Book of Joshua, and falsified their whole history. In their own history and chronology, the Samaritans prove, to their own satisfaction, that they are the only true representatives of the Israelites who entered Palestine under Joshua; and that their priest's family can trace their genealogy in an unbroken chain up to Aaron, the first high priest of the nation.

The name "Samaritans" is generally believed to be derived from Samaria, the capital of the Ten Tribes; but when we come to consider the etymology of the word, it becomes more difficult to determine. The Hebrew name for the city and the district is Shomron (שֹׁמְרוֹן); and the inhabitants would consequently be Shomronim

(שֹׁמְרֹנִים), just as we find the name to be in the only place where it is made use of in Scripture (2 Kings xvii. 29). But the Samaritans are not called Shomronim, but Shomrim (שׁוֹמְרִים)—from the verb *shamar* (שמר), to guard or keep watch. Their own explanation of this is, that they have been so called because they are the keepers of the law of Moses. The same idea was entertained by several of the Christian fathers, especially Epiphanius and Jerome, who had borrowed it most likely from the Samaritans themselves. But the most probable hypothesis is, that this name was given them, in the first instance, by the Greeks, as the inhabitants of the district of Samaria, and then retained by themselves, whilst attaching to it the above signification. By the Jews they are called Cuthites (כֻּתִּים)—a term of reproach—as the descendants of the mixed people who inhabited Samaria, as previously explained, a portion of which were natives of Cuthah. The same term is applied by the Samaritans to the Jews, averring that the latter, ever since the captivity, are truly a Cuthite nation.

Whatever may be said with regard to the origin and name of this nation, the outlines of their history are undeniable. At the time of the return from Babylon, we find them dwelling in the cities of Ephraim, and clustering around Gerizim as their sacred mountain. No people, perhaps, have been more persecuted and oppressed from age to age than they have; but it has served only to knit them the more closely together.

In ages past we find them inhabiting various cities in Palestine,* and extending even to Constantinople; but now the remnant of their nation dwell only in Nablus. There was a tradition amongst them, which has yet hardly died out, that large numbers of their brethren were dwelling in various parts of the world—in England, France, India, and elsewhere—similar to the vague notion of many Europeans concerning the lost Ten Tribes; and they have written concerning them from time to time, in the hopes of becoming acquainted with these their brethren. Nablus, however, was in all ages, as it now is, their sacred city; and here they live together Gheto-like, on the south-western side of the city, at the very foot of their sacred Mount Gerizim. They have now dwindled down to a very small number, and before many generations more have passed away, this nation, in all probability, will have become extinct. When I first visited them in 1855, the community consisted of forty families, amounting to a hundred and fifty individuals. On my second visit in 1860, there was an increase of one person; which, on my mentioning the fact, gave Amram no small satisfaction.

In appearance the Samaritans are far superior to their circumstances, as also to all others around them.

* Edrisi, the Arabian geographer of the twelfth century, asserts that the whole of the Samaritans were then located in Nablus, with the exception of one town on the road from Gaza to Egypt. But earlier as well as later authors found them scattered through various towns. Vid. El Masudi's "Hyst. Encycl." vol. i. 114. "Benjamin of Tudela's Travels," &c.

I had seen individuals, among Arabs and Jews, of as noble aspect as any *one* of them; but as a community, there is nothing in Palestine to compare with them. A straight and high forehead, full brow, large and rather almond-shaped eye, aquiline nose, somewhat large mouth, and well formed chin, are their chief physiological characteristics; and, with few exceptions, they are tall and of lofty bearing. They seem to be all of one type, and bear an unmistakable family likeness.*

In this they differ from the Jews, who have assimilated in physical as well as in moral qualities to the nations among whom they have long dwelt.† On the other hand, the small number of the Samaritans, their habit of living together, their intermarriages, and other circumstances, all tend to preserve in them the same physiognomic cast. And if the present community is a fair specimen of what the nation was in ancient times, they must have been a fine race; and perhaps the fact of their being a mixed people would strengthen us in this supposition. But to speculate upon the subject would be as dangerous as it would be out of place here; although there are few spots

* "Many of the men were models of manly beauty, tall and dignified in form, and with lofty, open, and most engaging countenances." — Mr. Grove, in "Vacation Tourists," 1861.

† Every one who is tolerably acquainted with the subject knows well how the Jews of Europe differ according to their adopted nationalities; nor is this less the case in other parts of the world. The present state of the Jews *as a nation* is a most conclusive proof of the power of physical and moral conditions to modify and change one and the same people to almost every kind of type and colour.

more inviting to the ethnologist than is Palestine and its people.*

Before I proceed any further, it may be desirable that I should introduce my reader to the principal officials of the community, notwithstanding that one of them is since deceased.

First and eldest comes Shalmah Ben Tabiah, priest of the Most High at Nablus, as he usually signed his name. He was first made known to European scholars through his correspondence with M. Silvestre de Sacy, the illustrious French Orientalist. He was still alive on my first visit to them; and I felt no little interest in seeing the venerable old man. On my first introduction he wore a striped cotton *gumbaz*—a kind of long open gown, overlapping in front, and fastened by a silk *sunnar*, or girdle, above the loins. Over this he

* One of the best authorities on the subject has summed up the question of race thus:—"The extent to which the phenomena of what is called *race* are liable to over-valuation is considerable; so rare and exceptional is any approach to pure blood, and so little do pedigree and nationality coincide. The most powerful nations are the most heterogeneous. Yet the inference that mixture favours social development would be as unsafe as the exaggeration of the effects of purity. The conditions which are least favourable for a prominent place in the world's history, are the best for the preservation of old characters. The purest populations of Europe are the Basques, the Laps, the Poles, and the Frisians; yet who can predict any important character to them all? To attribute national aptitudes and inaptitudes, or national predilections and antipathies, to the unknown influences of blood, so long as the patent facts of history and the external circumstances remain unexhausted, is to cut the Gordian knot rather than to untie it. That there is something in pedigree is probable; but in the mind of the analytical ethnologist, this something is much nearer to nothing than to everything."—*Latham.*

had a *jibbeh*, a kind of loose robe of blue cloth. He wore no stockings nor socks, but had a pair of *surmaiyeh*, or shoes, of yellow morocco leather. His turban was large and of a red colour. He seemed to be a man of about seventy years of age*—tall, thin, with rather an elongated face, dark quick eyes, a Roman nose, a long white beard, and an intelligent look, though without the open countenance I afterwards found his people generally to possess; but unmistakably possessing that sinister glance of the eye so common in his country. He spoke in a loud rough manner, with no indication of a better training than the commonest of his people. After some few remarks, upon learning whence I had come, his whole conversation turned upon the mission of one of his people to England. This messenger—Yacub esh Shelaby—had been sent to England the previous year (1854) for the purpose of collecting alms for the benefit of the Samaritan community, which was in great distress on account of the oppression of the local government, and of the failure of the crops in the preceding year (1853). Shalmah had heard that Shelaby had met with great success, but had remitted nothing up to that time, which had put him in a terrible rage; and he wished to know from me the real facts of the case. I had nothing to tell him except that I had seen the young man, and that I had contributed my mite to the good cause; so I endeavoured to assuage his anger by persuading him to be patient, and telling him I had no doubt that all would

* From their chronological table Sam.=A.D. 1790.
I find that he was born in 6221 A.M.

eventually be right. But it was to no purpose: I could neither introduce any other subject, nor calm the present storm. The old patriarch was thoroughly taken up with the matter, denouncing Shelaby, in the most unmeasured style, and would listen to nothing else; so I left him to vent his wrath, in the hope of having a calmer interview the next time. But he never could forget this wrong; and I was sorry to find, after the lapse of some years, that the wound was still unhealed, and that the present priest felt equally sore upon this point. Shalmah had never studied grammar, nor any other science; his information was extremely limited, but he was uncommonly shrewd, and thoroughly versed in the theology and literature of his own people. He knew the law by heart, and was perfectly acquainted with what Samaritan commentators and disputants had written concerning it. He thus stood high among his own people as a learned man, and deservedly so too; but his neighbours of other creeds knew little about his theological lore, and cared less. In one thing, however, he stood high in the estimation of all—as a necromancer. No faith has a deeper root in the Oriental mind than that of conjuration in its various branches; and Shalmah was an acknowledged master of all its secrets. Here he stood alone; and all sought him, both Christians and Mohammedans, as well as his own people—all flocked to consult him, from the local governor to the poorest inhabitant. The objects of these consultations were as various as the people themselves—the repulse of, or an attack upon, an enemy; the

success of a love affair; the removal of barrenness; the cure of a disease; the warding off of an evil eye; in fact, anything and everything believed to be subject to the wizard's wand were laid before him with the greatest confidence in his magic abilities; from which, I believe, Shalmah derived a fair harvest.

Amram Ben Shalmah is the eldest son of the above, and the present priest of the Samaritans.* He is of middle size, rather full habit, dark eyes, fine Roman nose, intelligent face, and open frank countenance, with much kindness in his looks and manners. I was very favourably impressed with him on our first interview; and much subsequent intercourse only deepened the impression. He was then, of course, a family man. He had been married for several years, but was without male issue; and fearing lest the priesthood should become extinct—the Samaritan law being that the priest must be of the same line—Amram had taken to himself a second wife, and both he and the community were greatly rejoicing at the birth of a son. Five years later, I saw the child, and was pleased to find him a healthy, handsome, intelligent, talkative, and most interesting lad, the pride of his father. Both wives were living together with their husband on the best of terms.

During my later stay of two months in the place, I had much communication with Amram; not a day passing without our spending some hours together. I found him to be most intelligent in all questions pertaining to the

* From their chronological table I find that Amram was born in the year 6247 A.M. Sam. = 1816 A.D., and is now in his forty-eighth year.

history and literature of his people, but singularly deficient in all other kinds of information. He knew the Pentateuch as well as their other books of service by heart, and had a thorough acquaintance with all their commentaries and literary works. I found him also to be a man of great simplicity of character. Considering his education and training, and the immoral influences of all the circumstances that surrounded him, I was surprised to find him so frank and honest. He was liberal-minded and communicative, neither given to conceal nor prevaricate, so far as I could judge, when discussing religious or secular subjects. He was decidedly the most favourable specimen of all the natives I met with, of any creed, with the exception of two or three who had been deeply impressed by the truths of the Gospel. I shall ever retain for him the highest respect.*

I may as well add here, that I am indebted to him for all the information I obtained upon Samaritan matters. I have stated nothing of importance in the following pages but on his authority.

Yacub Ben Aaron was a nephew of Amram, and the minister of the synagogue. He was a young man, twenty-one years of age; married, of course. He was rather under the middle height, of spare habit, with large dark eyes, a good nose, elongated and pale face, kind looks, but

* His liberal conduct to me, I have every reason to believe, was owing principally to the kind introductions given me by James Finn, Esq., the British Consul at Jerusalem, who had taken much interest in the Samaritans; and by a native Christian, Mr. Ode Azam, an old and tried friend of Amram, with whom I had lived for some time in Jerusalem.

a rather weak frame; of the same type of countenance and bearing as his people, though not so good-looking as his uncle. On my first visit it was he who acted as my guide through the town and neighbourhood; and on my second visit we instantly recognized each other as old friends.

In a few days after my arrival, he and his uncle expressed a desire that I would teach them English during my stay. I was glad of the opportunity, and readily acquiesced, it being the first instance on record, I believe, of a Samaritan official soliciting and submitting to the teaching of a Gentile. It happened that I had with me, amongst other books, a primer in Arabic and English, published by the missionaries at Beirut; and this I used as a lesson-book. I gave them a lesson daily; but Amram's zeal for acquiring English soon died away. In about a week or nine days' time, placing himself as usual in readiness for his lesson, "Oh," said he, "I wish you could teach me English without any trouble to myself—put it into my head just as I drink coffee!" And so, with a pipe of tobacco and a cup of coffee, his English ended. Yacub, however, continued his study with unabated zeal, as long as I remained with them; and I was surprised at the progress he made in so short a time.

In conclusion, it is well that we should remark here that the present family are not descendants of Aaron, but merely Levites. The last of the descendants of Aaron died in the year 6062 A.M. Sam. = A.D. 1631, and the following year the first Levite was consecrated

to the office. Since that time the priesthood has been invested in the present family. All the duties belonging to the priesthood devolve upon the present priest, although some of the most pompous ceremonies seem to have ceased with the house of Aaron, as mentioned elsewhere.

CHAPTER I.

DOMESTIC LIFE AND DUTIES.

OUR object in this chapter will be, to follow the Samaritan through the stages of life, pointing out briefly the particular domestic duties enjoined upon him.

We shall begin with his birth. No people in the world are more anxious for offspring than the people of Palestine seem to be. To have children is a matter of as great anxiety to them now-a-days as it was in ancient times; and to be reproached with barrenness is as keenly felt by a wife of modern times as it was by Hannah in days of yore (1 Sam. i. 5, 6). Under these circumstances they never fail to make it still a matter of prayer—the most sincere prayer, probably, they offer during life. Should this fail, there is no end to the charms they resort to for the accomplishment of their object. When a child is born, a messenger is despatched without delay to announce the welcome news to the father, just as in the time of the prophet (Jer. xix. 15); especially if it be a male child. All their anxiety is for male issue—hence their common expression of good wishes, "May you be blessed with many sons." Daughters are never considered blessings. When a female child is born, the messenger that

bears the news to the father never disgraces him with the truth, but even then, should he be in the presence of others, announces, "A man child is born unto thee." Such is the unnatural but great distinction made between males and females in the East; not by Samaritans only, but likewise by other creeds.* As an illustration of this feeling, a native friend told me the following incident:—The wife of one of his neighbours happening to be near her confinement, the husband, one day, called him in, and requested him to read a portion of the New Testament, adding, "It may be that God will grant me a son." But, instead of a son, the mother gave birth to twin daughters. The parents were quite distracted. One of the children soon died; and the other followed in a day or two after. My friend had not the least doubt that both deaths were caused by the father; and, from vexation on account of her little ones, the poor mother followed the babes to the grave in less than a fortnight.

When a man child is born, the first ceremony enacted is to receive him into the Abrahamic covenant by circumcision. It is performed, upon the whole, in a similar manner to that of the Jews,† with the following

* Nestorian parents used to consider the birth of a daughter a great calamity. When asked the number of their children, they would count up their sons, and make no mention of their daughters. The birth of a son was an occasion for great joy and giving of gifts. Neighbours hastened to congratulate the happy father, but days might elapse before the neighbourhood knew of the birth of a daughter.—"Mission in Western Asia," April, 1864.

† For a detailed account of the ceremony we must refer the reader to our "British Jews."

exceptions:—1. Circumstances may cause the Jews to defer it till the ninth, tenth, or eleventh, or even the twelfth day; but with the Samaritans it is always performed on the eighth day, and if possible on the eighth hour of that day, after birth. The ceremony must be performed on the eighth day, should it be even the Sabbath, as it was, undoubtedly, done by the Jews in the time of our Saviour (John vii. 22). 2. The Jews have *sandakin, i.e.* something answering to sponsors among Christians, but the Samaritans have none. 3. The most painful part of the ceremony as performed by the Jews—the rent—is never done by the Samaritans. In this they agree with the Karaite Jews, and call it a superfluous cruelty. 4. With the Jews, the child is held, during the operation, by the male *sandak;* but with the Samaritans it is held by the mother. Their reason for this is, that the mother and her offspring are unclean for eighty days; therefore no one else could perform the duty without being defiled. 5. With the Jews, the ceremony is generally performed in the synagogue; but the Samaritans, like the Karaite Jews, never perform it in the synagogue, but always in the parents' house. 6. Lastly, with the Jews it is performed by a *mohel*—a recognized person qualified for the work; but with the Samaritans it is generally performed by the priest. In his absence any one acquainted with the mode of operating may perform it. The ceremony being over, they celebrate it, like the Jews, by a feast, prepared by the parents at their own house, and enlivened by Arab music and singing.

Before the ceremony of circumcising takes place, the parents and their friends choose a name for the child, which is announced, as of old, during the performance of the ceremony (Luke i. 59). The names employed are scriptural ones, and mostly confined to those of the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua; such as Abraheem, Yacub, Yuseph, Amram, Benyamin,* &c. But here we must observe that they, like the Jews, adopt two names—one Hebrew, the circumcision name, which is considered sacred, and used only among themselves; and the other Arabic: adding a surname, which is common, and used in their intercourse with other people, and in the common transactions of life.

At the birth of a female child the only ceremony performed is that of naming. This is always done on the third day, at the house of the parents. There is no particular rite, nor any gathering of the people: it is simply a private family affair. The parents choose the name, and the priest announces it in the hearing of those who may happen to be present, and the ceremony is finished.

Formerly the Samaritans used to redeem the firstborn

* The Bible names are mostly significant, being conferred with regard to some circumstance connected with the child's birth. It is curious to find that the same idea still prevails among some nations of Asia. Among the Karens of Burmah the parents name the child at its birth, but should it exhibit any particular trait of character as it grows up, the friends give it another name indicative of that trait, adding "father" or "mother" to it, according to the sex. Thus, if a boy be very quick at work, he is named *A-khle-pa*, father of swiftness; or a girl clever to contrive, she is called *Na-koo-ne-meu*, mother of contrivance.

child according to the commandment (Exod. xiii. 11, 12; Num. iii. 47); but now the ceremony is discontinued on account of the poverty of their community.

Among the Jews, when the male child attains his second year he is taught to wear the *araba kanphoth*, or sacred dress with fringes, and continues to do so till death, as a most solemn duty; but the Samaritans never use it, nor, as I was assured by Amram, have they ever been in the habit of doing so.

Nor do they use the phylacteries or *tephillin* at prayer, as the Jews do. As an instance of the animus existing between the two people, I may here mention that, when discussing this subject with Amram, he remarked, "God, when He said, 'Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes' (Deut. vi. 8), only meant that the commandments should be put into the understanding and the heart, not on the forehead and arm; but He has left the Jews to use them as signs of their being the children of Esau. Just as the red string was tied upon his arm at his birth, so do they" (the Jews) "tie the leathern thong around their arms."

For the same reason they never use the *mezuzah*,* as the Jews do.

Among the Jews no one is considered a member of the congregation of Israel until he has attained his thirteenth year, when he becomes a *bar mitsvah*, or son of the covenant. Up to this

* Portions of the law written on vellum, and folded in a tube, and nailed to the doorpost.—See "British Jews," p. 28.

age, he is, according to the Jewish theology, under the guidance and control of his parents; but now he becomes accountable, as a moral agent, for his own actions; and has, therefore, to pass through the ordeal and ceremony of *bar mitsvah*.

The Samaritans, however, have no such initiation. They hold that every one becomes accountable when he is able to distinguish between right and wrong; and every male child is received as a member of the congregation so soon as he is able to read the law and the prayers.

We may as well mention in this place that the Jews, while engaged in the public service of the synagogue, wear a kind of scarf with fringes of similar manufacture to the *arba' kanphoth*, called *talith*;* but the Samaritans have discontinued its use. The reason given by Amram for this was, that the importance of the *talith* being dependent upon the fringes attached to the four corners, and the knowledge of the exact colour of the fringes being lost, they deemed it better not to wear them at all than to use wrong ones.

The command is this:—"And the Eternal spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, that they make them a fringe in the borders of their garments throughout their generations, and that they put upon the fringe of the borders a thread of blue purple" (Num. xv. 37, 38).† The word rendered here "blue purple" is תְּכֵלֶת (*techeleth*),

* See "British Jews," p. 97. † Dr. Benisch's translation.

and refers, probably, to the shell-fish from which the Tyrian purple was obtained, celebrated from the earliest times. The uncertainty, however, as to the exact colour, was the reason assigned by Amram for the disuse of the *talith;* but I have my suspicions that Amram's version was only a part of the truth. In their letters, written some two hundred years ago, to their supposed brethren in England, we are expressly told that the priest put on the *talith* when taking the law out of its place to exhibit to the congregation.* From which I infer that it was the priest only that wore the *talith;* and one might have supposed that the ceremony had ceased with the Aaronic line, but that Shalmah, Amram's father, makes mention of the same fact, and adds that they make fringes of the colour of the hyacinth.† I observed the priest repeatedly, when bringing forth the law out of the *musbah,* enveloped in a talith-like garment, but without fringes.

The Samaritans, like their neighbours, have a strong antipathy to celibacy; and this feeling is probably intensified amongst them by the paucity of their number, combined with their strong desire for offspring. This, together with an early development in such a climate, leads them to marry at a very early age. The males are marriageable at fourteen, and the females at ten, and in some cases as early as eight years of age. Among them, like their neighbours of all creeds, affection has little to do in the matter.

* Correspondance des Samaritains, Lettre No. 12.

† Ibid., Lettre No. 9.

The affair is settled for them by the priest and the parents; and the young man has, perhaps, never seen his bride's face till the moment they become husband and wife. As of old, the father seeks a wife for his son; and inasmuch as he has to pay a certain dowry to the bride's father, he has to choose according to circumstances, the amount of dowry depending upon the age of the bride and the position of her family.

We must here mention that the Samaritans never intermarry with persons of another creed—whether circumcised or uncircumcised. And in addition to the prohibition in the law to marry certain relations, they forbid one to marry the daughter of a brother or sister, and rail most bitterly at the Jews for doing so; but it is not unlawful to marry a cousin.

There is no regular ceremony of betrothment as among the Jews. The priest merely hands over the ring to the bride a few days before the marriage takes place, as a token of betrothment; and that is all.

To them, as to all Orientals, there are lucky and unlucky days; and the marriage-day must, of course, be a lucky one. The only day fixed upon by them for this important event is Thursday. The ceremony itself is much more simple with them than with the Jews. When the day arrives, the priest sends two men to the bride's house in the morning to be witnesses of the agreement; and at midday they bring the bride and her friends to the bridegroom's house, where the ceremony is to be performed, the priest officiating. The service consists of portions of the law; and certain prayers being

repeated, the marriage agreement read, and blessings pronounced, all in the original Abranee, an unknown tongue to the parties most concerned, all is concluded. In the evening a feast is made, followed by music, singing, and dancing; performed, however, not by themselves, but by hired Mussulmans. On the following Sabbath the young man is particularly expected to attend synagogue, when the priest offers a set prayer on his behalf.

As a people, they are not at all given to polygamy. At present there is one good reason for the exercise of this virtue—the number of women being so small amongst them. Of late it has become a difficulty to provide a wife for each of their young men; for rather than marry out of their own pale, they would prefer becoming extinct as a nation. Amram, as a father to his people, has frequently to exercise all the prudence at his command in settling these affairs. There is nothing in their theology prohibiting polygamy: it allows any one to take more than one wife, if the first be willing, but on that condition only. This condition, however, did not anciently exist; and it is now unnecessary, as the proportion of both sexes of itself forbids polygamy.

The Samaritans are not given to divorcement, like their neighbours the Jews and Mohammedans. Whether this be the result of more exalted ideas of the sacredness of the marriage tie, is very questionable. It may be owing, principally, to the paucity of their females; for should any one now put away his wife, he would

stand a fair chance of going without one for the remainder of his life. And yet such a conclusion would be hardly fair, since their modern theology forbids divorcement, except only for the cause of fornication—agreeing, on this point, with the Karaite Jews.

In further conversation with Amram on the subject, he said that the divorced person was not allowed to marry again, but was put to death, according to the law (Lev. xx. 10). On putting the question to him, Did they actually put the divorced to death? he assured me that they formerly did. "The law," he said, "evidently demanded it, and we complied with its demands." The manner of putting to death for this crime was by hanging with a cord. No such execution, however, had happened in Amram's time, nor in the time of his father. He wished me to believe that they had had no cause for the execution of the law for a long time; and in this he might have been right. I knew, however, of two cases, which had just occurred, which did not very well agree with the assertions of the priest. One was the case of Yacub Shelaby—the young man already mentioned—whose intended bride, during his absence in England, had been given to another. This was justified on the plea of Yacub's dishonourable conduct as their messenger to England, coupled with the report that he was living there like the Gentiles. The other was the case of a near relative of Yacub Shelaby—a deaf and dumb person. His wife, after they had been living together for some time, was taken from him, and given to another. He often called upon

me, and endeavoured, by signs and gesticulations, to tell me his sad tale. He seemed to be in great sorrow, poor fellow! for his wife. The only reason for such an act that I could learn, was his inability to provide for the support of his wife or of himself. But I could not accept Amram's version as a full and correct account of their laws of divorcement, especially with regard to punishing the divorced. That such a punishment was enforced in certain cases there is no doubt; but not generally. Referring him to some passages in the law on the point, he endeavoured to reconcile them with what he had already told me; but found the passage in Deut. xxiv. 1–4, a little too much for his ingenuity; and dismissing it as well as he could, he remarked that Moses could not give one law in Leviticus and a different one in Deuteronomy. "No," said he; "it is the Jews who have perverted the truth;" forgetting, at the moment, that the very passage is in their own law.

Among the Jews, and under certain circumstances, when a wife becomes a widow, if without issue it is the duty of the brother of her deceased husband to marry her, or to set her free in order that she may marry any other person. This ceremony of setting her free is called *chalitsah*.* But the Samaritans have no such ceremony; nor would they allow any one to marry the widow of his brother, even had both parties a desire for it. According to Samaritan theology, it would be in direct contradiction to the law. In proof of this,

* For the details, see "British Jews," p. 53.

Amram read to me the following passages:—"Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy brother's wife: it is thy brother's nakedness" (Lev. xviii. 16). "And if a man shall take his brother's wife, it is an unclean thing: he hath uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless" (xx. 21). I then read to him the following passages:—"If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger: her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of an husband's brother unto her. And it shall be, that the firstborn which she beareth shall succeed in the name of his brother which is dead, that his name be not put out of Israel. And if the man like not to take his brother's wife, then let his brother's wife go up to the gate unto the elders, and say, My husband's brother refuseth to raise up unto his brother a name in Israel, he will not perform the duty of my husband's brother. Then the elders of his city shall call him, and speak unto him: and if he stand to it, and say, I like not to take her; then shall his brother's wife come unto him in the presence of the elders, and loose his shoe from off his foot, and spit in his face, and shall answer and say, So shall it be done unto that man that will not build up his brother's house. And his name shall be called in Israel, The house of him that hath his shoe loosed" (Deut. xxv. 5–10). Upon this he remarked that the word "brother" meant here one of the same family, and not one born of the same parents. The law enjoined

a duty under certain circumstances—circumstances that would have occurred in former ages—between certain relations, but, of course, not the relations already forbidden by the law. Such is the Samaritan law and practice; and we may add here that the Karaite Jews practise it in the like manner. But there is no doubt that the Jews in the time of our Saviour understood the Mosaic law and observed its practice as they do at the present time (Mark xii. 19–27).

We shall now mention those principal observances, the neglect of which would be considered a grave error in the fulfilment of their daily duties. These duties equally devolve upon both sexes.

Purifications.—And firstly of purifications. There are seven things that defile; four relative to both sexes, and three confined to the female sex. These are the following:—1. The conjugal act; 2. Nocturnal pollution; 3. Touching any dead body; 4. Touching unclean birds, quadrupeds, or reptiles; 5. A female, through hæmorrhage; 6. A female's menstrual discharge, when she is to remain unclean for seven days; 7. Child-birth, when the mother remains unclean for forty-one days, if the child be male; but if female, for eighty days. On account of these defilements, they most scrupulously purify themselves. When sacrifices were offered, the ashes of a burnt heifer were kept to be mixed with running water, and sprinkled upon the unclean person by one that was clean, according to the law (Num. xix. 17–19). Now running water only is used. At all events, if there is any substitute for the

heifer's ashes, it was concealed from me. I may add here that they purify themselves, also, before entering upon any peculiarly sacred act, as we shall subsequently see.

Morning.—When they rise in the morning, they have no ceremonial washing of hands as the Jews have; whenever they wash themselves it is merely for the purpose of cleansing. Their first duty is to repeat their morning prayer, which is long and tedious. This must be done the very first thing, not only before doing any manner of work, but also before tasting either food or drink; and, to use Amram's expression, "even before a whiff of tobacco be taken." It is generally offered by each individual in private, although there is no law against its being repeated in the hearing of the family. The prayer is a set one, and is repeated in the early morning and at sunset. Any one is at liberty to repeat this, or any other prayer, as often as he pleases during the day; but the morning and evening prayer must on no account be neglected. All their prayers are composed in the Hebrew tongue, and, consequently, not understood except by one or two beside the priest. Still, the sacredness of the language, combined with the antiquity of the prayer, impart to it a kind of hallowedness which has a strange hold upon the conscience of the people. During the prayer, they always turn towards Mount Gerizim: it being, we were told, the house of God, the dwelling-place of His presence and majesty, and the tabernacle of His angels. We ought here to remark that the distinction between male and female, made in

the Jewish morning prayer, is not made by the Samaritans. The only distinction among them between the two sexes in this matter is, that the female's prayer is a little shorter than the male's.

Food.—When they sit to eat, a blessing is pronounced before the food is served; and thanks again returned when they have finished. This duty devolves upon the head of the family.

They make the broadest distinction in articles of food, adhering faithfully to the law of Moses, and attaching the greatest importance to its observance. They never eat the flesh of any beast that does not chew the cud and divide the hoof, according to the law (Lev. xi. 3–8; Deut. xiv. 6–8); nor the flesh of a lawful beast unless killed by their own butcher, as we shall presently observe. Swine are expressly forbidden; and no other flesh is held in so great a detestation by the Samaritans —in which they agree with the Jews and the Mohammedans.

All kinds of poultry, excepting those enumerated by Moses as unclean (Lev. xi. 13–25), are considered lawful. All kinds of fish that have not fins and scales are held unlawful (Lev. xi. 9–12).

Like the Jews, they hold it to be unlawful to partake of flesh and butter (or milk) at the same meal, or even to place them on the table at the same time. Six hours must elapse after partaking of meat before milk or butter can be taken. The Jews found this custom upon the passage, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk" (Exod. xxiii. 19); but the Samaritans

refuse to it the importance of a law of Moses, and only observe it as a sanatory rule laid down by their sages.

They prepare their own eatables—bread, cheese, butter, &c.; and it is unlawful for them to eat any made by either Jews or Gentiles. But the greatest care is taken with regard to flesh. Cattle and poultry must be slaughtered by their own butcher, who alone is duly qualified for the duty. They, like the Jews, call him *shochet* (שוחט), killer; and he has to pass through a course of study and training before he is qualified to kill according to the numerous rules prescribed by their sages. Therefore it is not till two elder *shochets* have pronounced any one to be duly qualified that he is at liberty to undertake the duties of his calling. The mode of killing is much the same as with the Jews, so I need not here enter into further detail.*

It was most amusing, when discussing this subject, to hear Amram ridiculing the Jews for not eating the hind quarters of the animal, as related in Gen. xxxii. 32; adding that the fact is there mentioned, not in praise, but in derision for their folly. And yet, on further talk, I found that they themselves do not eat it unless a certain number of the sinews that are in the thigh be taken out, just as the Jews do. Our friend, in his eagerness to deride his old enemies, forgot for the moment that the passage referred to the descendants of the patriarch, who, according to his own account, must be the Samaritans. He was not a little chagrined when the question was put to him, What relation could

* See "British Jews."

there be between the patriarch's thigh and the hind quarter of an animal? "Oh," said he, "only to remind us of the fact."

Much of the Samaritan ceremonies with reference to the dying and the dead, agree with those practised by the other communities of the land, which we have, to some extent, described in another chapter; but in several particulars they differ, though mostly agreeing with the Jews.

The Confession of Faith.—With the Samaritans, as with the Jews, the dying person is taught to say, as his last words, "The Lord our God is one Lord." It is of the greatest importance that the person should pronounce this as his last utterance; and it must be repeated neither in Arabic nor in Samaritan, but in the original Hebrew. Therefore, all their people—women and children—are taught most carefully this much of the sacred tongue.

When the person has expired, they immediately commence the ceremony of purification by washing the body carefully with clean water. This is done by persons appointed for the duty from amongst themselves; and is much the same as the Jewish purification of the dead. They have been accused of leaving the treatment of their dead to hired Mussulmans or Christians, but this is altogether false.

The relatives of the dead never rend their clothes,* as do the Jews: for they consider it to be contrary to the will of God. They light candles, however, merely, ac-

* In this they agree with the Karaite Jews.

cording to Amram's interpretation, as a token of respect and honour to the dead; and place them at the head and feet. They have no definite number of lights on the occasion, but multiply them according to the ability or inclination of the nearest relations.

Mourning for the dead with them is a matter of feeling only. They have no law, nor even any stereotyped custom, to regulate them; consequently no set time: some mourn for a longer, and some for a shorter time, according to circumstances. Nor are they given to indulge in this feeling: their theological sentiments forbid it; but are rather induced to forget the dead as a duty towards God as well as themselves. Nor do they, as the Jews do, pray to the dead on any occasion. "We never pray," exclaimed Amram, "even to living men, much less would we pray to those that are dead: we only pray to the living God." Nor do they pray on behalf of the dead—the Jewish *kadish*, or set prayer for the dead, being unknown to them—believing that at death the individual's doom is for ever settled. Consequently, they have no Jewish *jahrtseit*,* or anniversary of a parent's death; but, on the contrary, it is a point with them never to mention the dead if possible, but to endeavour to forget them.

At first I was rather surprised that the Samaritans should have cultivated such sentiments in the midst of creeds so essentially different, and especially as the Pentateuch exhibits such illustrious examples of rending clothes and mourning for the dead as those of

* Nor do the Karaite Jews observe *kadish* or *jahrtseit*.

Jacob for the supposed death of his son Joseph, and of Joseph at the death of his father (Gen. xxxvii. 34; l. 3, 10), until I was reminded that the priest was forbidden to mourn excepting for one near of kin (Lev. xxi. 1–3); and that the high priest was in no case to mourn for the dead (Lev. xxi. 10), which indicated that, although mourning was not forbidden to the people, still, not to make a show of, nor indulge in it, signified a more thorough obedience to the will of God, and a higher religious state of mind.

As of old, the house where the dead lies is rendered unclean (Num. xix. 14); consequently the priest carefully avoids entering under that roof (Lev. xxi. 11).

Before the dead is carried to its final resting-place, the body is carefully wrapped in a cotton shroud (John xi. 44), and then placed in a wooden coffin. The coffin is of the most primitive make—only a few planks roughly nailed together.

It is curious to observe that no other natives of any creed make use of coffins; the Samaritans, however, scrupulously follow the example given them by their father Joseph (Gen. l. 26).

The burying-ground is called by them the House of the Dead; but by the Jews of all sections it is called the House of the Living. The use of this latter inappropriate name is for the sake of giving expression to the Jewish belief in a general resurrection of the dead. The same name is prevalent among the Karaite Jews, as among the Jews generally. When mentioning this fact to Amram, he laughed heartily, and exclaimed,

with an air of triumph, "They are contrary to the truth in this as in all other matters." But we cannot help observing here the peculiar notions entertained for the dead by Orientals generally, and by no people more than the Shemites. The dead to them are not truly dead, but rather in a kind of suspended animation; whence the Mussulmans visit the tombs of their dead, hold conversation with them, or at least give them the news of the day, and ask the blessing of their saints. The same notion is deeply inwrought into the Jewish mind; hence their visits and prayers at the tombs of their eminent rabbis. Perhaps this idea of the state of the dead lies as much or more at the root of the denomination of their burial-ground as the doctrine of a resurrection. And I could not but think, in spite of Amram's comment, that the same notion is shared by the Samaritans, as we shall have occasion yet to observe.

Their present cemetery is situate on the brow of the hill outside the gate on the western side of the town. It has only been in their possession for about eighty years. Previous to that time, they had one farther to the west, a much more valuable plot of land than the present one; but being robbed of that by the Mohammedans, they had no alternative but to accept this in place of it. But their most ancient burying-place, according to Amram's version, stood at the foot of Mount Ebal, not far from the eastern end of the valley. The tombs in that neighbourhood, which we have already described, might have belonged to it; although, as previously

remarked, similar tombs, and of still older appearance, girt the base of the mountain for the distance of a mile and a half or two miles. The base of Ebal has undoubtedly been the necropolis of Shechem from the earliest ages.

It only remains for us to mention that all the important passages of the law are read on the occasion of an illness—not by the priest, but by an appointed individual. As soon as all hope of recovery is given up, the reading of the law is commenced in the sick chamber, and continued up to the patient's death; and again resumed after the purification, and continued to Num. xxx. 1. After arranging the funeral procession, it is again resumed, until the whole law is repeated. This is followed by some few prayers by the priest. I was assured over and over again that the whole law was always repeated on such occasions. But no death having occurred amongst them during my stay in the town I had not the opportunity of witnessing the ceremonies.

CHAPTER II.

THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY.

OUR reader must not suppose that the domestic duties and ceremonies already explained have no relation to the Samaritan religion; on the contrary, they are all essentials of that faith, and have, perhaps, a deeper influence upon the conscience than other duties which we may consider to be much more of a religious nature. In the following pages, however, we shall treat of the Samaritan faith in its more general and public aspect.

The Samaritan, like the Jewish idea of religion, is national. To them their faith and people are synonymous. To give up the one is to forsake the other. That any one of their brethren could change his creed and yet remain a Samaritan is beyond their comprehension. The thought has never struck them that religion is a personal matter. To them it is a national code—a kind of compact between religion and nationality, not to be separated. To cling to one is to cling to the other; and to leave one is to leave both. Thus, they themselves make no difference between their political or national community and their religious community, but to them both are one and the same.

Our object, however, in these chapters, is to speak of them as a religious community only.

In this sense they are, according to their own belief, the only peculiar people of God, with whom the Almighty has entered into covenants, and which covenants they faithfully keep. These, we were told, are seven in number, and are as follows:—1. The covenant of Noah (Gen. ix. 14). 2. The covenant of Abraham concerning circumcision (Gen. xvii. 9–14). 3. The covenant of the Sabbath (Exod. xxxi. 12–17). 4. The covenant of the two tables of the ten commandments (Exod. xx. 2–17). 5. The covenant of salt (Num. xviii. 19). 6. The covenant of the Passover (Exod. xii. 2, &c.). 7. The covenant of the priesthood (Num. xxv. 12, 13). By virtue of these covenants, they are separated on the one hand from all the Gentiles, and on the other hand from the Jews, who are cursed, we are told, since the time of Eli. Therefore, to distinguish themselves from all others as a separate and peculiar people, their choice appellation for themselves is Samaritan Israelites.

Before we proceed, it will be necessary to name the officers of the community. These are only two in number—the priest and the minister. Both offices belong to the same family, and both are hereditary. These, according to their religious constitution, are the only offices that can belong to their community. No matter how large it might be—were it to grow so great as to be numbered by millions—there could be, according to their interpretation, but these two offices.

The priest, Amram, is the head minister. Upon him devolves the performance of all the duties prescribed in the law of Moses as pertaining to the priestly office. But these are now comparatively few, because they have no sacrifice—it being unlawful to sacrifice without a temple, which they, at present, have not; but instead of sacrifices, they offer certain prayers. These, together with the priestly blessings, are made, on all occasions, by the priest himself.

The Minister or *Chazan*.—Yacub, on the other hand, has to read the public service on all occasions, both in the synagogue and out of it. To him also belongs the duty of educating the people and their children.

But this distinction between the two offices seems to be more theoretical than practical. I witnessed the priest performing the common service on more than one occasion; and I could not distinguish where the line of demarcation existed between the two, except the pronouncing the priestly blessing. But the smallness of the community, and the paucity of the family of the priesthood, accounts for any irregularity that may now occur.

The two officers united constitute their *Beth Din*, or house of judgment. The priest, in virtue of his office, sits supreme, and the minister second; and before this tribunal all Samaritan matters, whether social or religious, are settled. When any difficult matter occurs, the priest calls others of the priestly family to assist in deciding the case; otherwise, all kinds of questions are settled by the two officers only. Should any dispute

arise between a Samaritan and any one of his Mohammedan neighbours, he is amenable, of course, to the Mohammedan tribunal of the town; but in all matters occurring among themselves as a people, their only court is their own *Beth Din*.

Formerly, when their community was larger and more flourishing than at present, they conferred titles upon their learned men—*Chacham*, *Rabbi*, *Morenu*, similar to the Jewish titles; these, however, were only distinctions of honour, entitling the persons to no privilege with regard to religious offices.

The Samaritans have no formula of belief, or set articles of faith. The only book amongst them resembling a confession of faith is a kind of catechism drawn up by one of their sages—Rabbi Ghazel Ben Ramiyahh. This is divided into two parts: one concerning the Eternal, and the other on certain social points, principally marriage and the Sabbath. The whole is put together in a loose, incoherent style, and is mostly of a trifling nature. Their great and distinguishing points are these four:—1. To believe in one Jehovah only. 2. To believe in Moses as the only lawgiver. 3. To believe in the *Torah* (law) as the only divine book. 4. To believe in Mount Gerizim as the only house of God. These, we were told, are the cardinal points of Samaritanism. But, so far as a more detailed theological creed is concerned, the thirteen articles drawn up by Maimonides * would as correctly express the Samaritan as the Jewish faith. Our object at present, however,

* See "British Jews," p. 68.

is to bring forward some of the principal dogmas in theology, pointing out how they are understood, taking Amram for our commentator.

And here it is important to observe that their only authority in theology is the Pentateuch: nothing is divine and binding but the law of Moses. All their dogmas are believed, whether rightly or wrongly, to be founded upon that sacred volume. The other Jewish sacred writers, whether prophets or historians, they utterly ignore; and the New Testament, of course, has no influence with them. Nor are they led even by their own sages, except in as far as they are able to show that their teaching is founded upon the law.* Thus, they hold that they are strictly and wholly the disciples of Moses. It becomes, therefore, a subject of no little interest to the biblical student to observe how most of the principal doctrines of revealed truth are held by the Samaritans to be the teaching of the law.

God.—The first article of belief with them, as with ourselves, is the one regarding the Eternal. They believe in one God, and one only. This they rightly hold to be the great principle upon which every other dogma hinges. Consequently, in Samaritan theology, all begins and ends with that passage in the law, "Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord." This

* Let it not be supposed, from what we have said, that the Samaritans have always agreed on theological points; they also have had their divisions. Masudi tells us that in his time they were divided into two general sects, which were separate from each other as much as from the Jews. One of these was the *Kushan*, and the other *Rushan*.—*Masudi*, vol. i. pp. 115, 116.

glorious being they hold to be a spirit—unseen, uncreated, eternal—first and last; and the author and maker of all things. He is also the judge of all; and to Him only is prayer to be offered. Believing Him to be manifested by different names, yet holding his nature and person to be one, they deny a plurality of persons.

Here we ought to observe that the Samaritans have been charged with cherishing idolatry in private, worshipping the god Nergal in the form of a bird. Hence, it has been alleged that they have the image of a bird (dove) placed on the covering of their law. This charge against them is as old as the authors of the Talmud, and has been repeated in after ages. Nothing, however, it seems, could have been more unfounded. They have no such image at present, and we were assured that they never had any; and there is no valid reason to disbelieve their testimony.

The names by which they call the Almighty are Jehovah, El, Elohim, Shaddai, and Adonai. The first, and most sacred of all, they use most frequently; and almost invariably begin a letter with the superscription *Beshem Jehovah*, or "In the name of Jehovah." The correct pronunciation of the word Jehovah has been a subject of much conjecture and dispute among critics for many ages; and De Sacy, in his correspondence with Shalmah, endeavoured to elicit from the priest the Samaritan pronunciation, but with no result; either from his misunderstanding the question, or from a disinclination to answer it, the illustrious Frenchman was left in the same uncertainty as before. Whenever Amram

and myself came across the word, whether in conversation or in reading, he uniformly pronounced it *Elwem*, the Samaritan pronunciation of Elohim. And I think it may be safely concluded that the adopted pronunciation of the Samaritans through past ages has been, not *Adonai*, like the Jews, but *Elwem*.*

Messiah.—They have a firm belief in the coming of Messiah.† They found this upon the words of Moses, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken" (Deut. xviii. 15). They differ, however, with regard to the character of the Messiah, as well from Jews as from Christians. They ridicule the Jewish idea of his being a king and a great conqueror. His mission, they say, is not to shed blood, but to heal the nations; not to make war, but to bring peace. He is to be, according to Moses' promise, a great teacher, a restorer of the law, one that will bring all the nations, by the illumination of his teaching, to unite in one service to one God. Therefore his common name with them is *Taebah* (תּוֹבָה),‡ or the Arabic equivalent, *Al Mudy*, because it is he whose mission

* The word Jehovah, from very ancient times, was, according to a tradition founded on Lev. xxiv. 16, considered too sacred to be pronounced; and the Talmudic authors believed that even he who *thought* this name with its true letters forfeited his future life (Sanhedr. 90). Hence the uncertainty of its original pronunciation.

† They never call Him by the name Messiah, that name not being of Mosaic origin; although, as Amram told me, they have no particular objection to the name.

‡ The better known name is *Hatah*, or rather *Hashah*, the restorer. On my mentioning this to Amram, he assured me they never used it, and that the name was

it is to turn the ungodly and unbelieving unto the Lord.

With respect to the person of the *Taebah*, they regard him merely as a man. He is not Moses, but inferior to him.* Moses was the greatest of all the servants of God. It was he that gave the law; and the office of the *Taebah* will be to restore that law to its purity, preach it to the world, and bring all the nations over to its practice. In fact, he will be a great teacher—a great reformer—expressly sent by the Almighty, and endowed with the necessary qualifications to perform so great and glorious a work.

During one of our conversations on this subject, I referred Amram to Gen. xlix. 10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." He immediately repeated the passage, pronouncing the word שילה, not Shiloh, according to the Jewish pronunciation, but *Shalah*; and said, on my further questioning him, that it referred to

even unknown to him. It is used, however, repeatedly in their letters to their supposed brethren in Europe, as well as to De Sacy. It may be that *Hashah* is only used in intercourse with those not of their own community, and *Taebah* the peculiar name amongst themselves. And this seems very probable, as Shalmah, in one of his letters to his supposed brethren, asks them, as a proof of their true Samaritan origin, by what name did they know the *Hashah*? But how to account for Amram's ignorance of the word I am at a loss to know, because he could not have misunderstood me, as I put the question to him more than once.

* Juynboll (Chron. Samar. p. 52) and others assert that it is Moses who is expected to come again; and give to the name *Hashah* the meaning of "he who returns." But this, according to Amram's exposition, is a mistake.

Solomon. David, said he, had the wish to build a temple in Jerusalem, and to transfer the tabernacle of the Lord from Mount Gerizim, where it then stood, to that city, but feared to commit such a daring outrage. Solomon, however, the most wicked of princes—the consequence of his vile intercourse with idolatrous nations—braved all the divine commands, and carried out his father's desire. Up to that time the nation was one in sentiment and practice; but this deed of Solomon made a rent in Israel, and ever after Ephraim and Judah became antagonistic; the former adhering to the Mosaic will, but the latter introducing numberless innovations. He further observed that the prophecy only meant unity, and not authority; the word should not be "foot" (רגל), but "banner" or "standard" (דגל).* I endeavoured to explain to him how his criticisms did not assist me to comprehend the justness of his comment; but all discussion was useless: the prophecy referred to Solomon, who, through his wicked alliances with the Gentiles had prospered so greatly; and in him it was fulfilled.

I may further remark that the *Taebah* or *Al Mudy* is to be a son of Joseph, of the tribe of Ephraim. This they found upon the words of Moses:—"And for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof, and for the good will of him that dwelt in the bush: let the blessing come upon the head of Joseph, and upon

* I was not aware at the moment that any dispute existed with regard to this difference of reading, but on referring to the Samaritan copy I found it to be the actual reading.

the top of the head of him that was separated from his brethren" (Deut. xxxiii. 16). I once put the question to him whether they had any idea when the Al Mudy would come? was there any appointed time for his appearance? To which he replied, there was no certainty on the matter; but, according to their best authorities, they expected him in the year 1910 of the Christian era.

There will be peculiar signs of his coming, but what these may be I was unable to learn; they are kept a secret amongst themselves, not to be divulged to the unbelievers.

During his ministration, the law and religion of Moses will be restored to all their glory, and the sanctity of Mount Gerizim will be established. He will also discover the ancient tabernacle, with all its sacred furniture, including the holy ark, with the two tables of the law; when the tabernacle and its service will be re-established on their sacred mount, the house of God.

The Taebah, however, will not be immortal; he also, like all mankind, must die. How long he may live is uncertain; but he will die somewhere in the neighbourhood of Mount Gerizim, and be buried by the side of his father Joseph.

A future state.—They firmly believe in a future state. They hold that the human soul is an undying spirit, which, at the hour of death, leaves the body, and enters into another world, and a different state of existence. The life of the body is dependent upon its unity with the soul; but the soul has life in

itself. Therefore the human spirit cannot die, but remains a living being after death.

When the priest had given me this explanation of their views, I felt no little interest to know upon what passage or passages in the law they founded such a doctrine; and, to my great surprise, he immediately quoted Exod. iii. 6: "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;" the very passage quoted by our Saviour (Mark xii. 26); and commented upon it almost in the very same words. The Almighty is not a God of the dead; therefore the patriarchs were alive with God in the time of Moses, and are still alive with him.

Resurrection.—They believe in the resurrection of the dead as firmly as they do in a future state. The very same body which belonged to the soul before death will yet arise, and be united with it as formerly. This will take place some time after the death of the whole human race. The time and manner are wholly dependent upon the will of God, and will be effected by his power only. "The fact, however," said our commentator, "is revealed in the law;" and he quoted Gen. ix. 5:—"And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man."

Other passages were quoted, as "See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand" (Deut. xxxii. 39).

I felt curious to know their ideas with regard to the nature and duration of the life in the future world, and especially after the resurrection. The reply Amram gave was that it is quite uncertain whether it will be everlasting or not; their theology, he said, did not settle that point. It would depend entirely on the will of God. I quoted that passage from Paul's Second Epistle to Timothy, where he speaks of the advent of our Saviour, "who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." * This idea was new to him, and he seemed to be pleased with it; but the authority had no influence with him.

Future misery and happiness.—They believe that in the future world there are two abodes, one the seat of happiness, the other the seat of misery. The former is the abode of God; the latter the abode of the devil. All those who are good on earth go after their death to this place of felicity; but all who are wicked go to the place of torment. According to Amram's idea, the place of torment is a little below this earth, and the place of happiness much above it.

Forgiveness of sins.—Amram admitted that the Samaritans were not all good. I partly knew his opinion with regard to other creeds—all who rejected the law of Moses were, of course, of the wicked. But how could the wicked of the Samaritans be made good, and the sins of those who were not perfect be forgiven?

* 2 Tim. i. 10: "Who hath overcome death, and hath brought into the light an imperishable life through the gospel."—*Dr. Turnbull's translation.*

According to their theology, all those who strove to do the will of God as revealed in the law were good, and their failings God would forgive. There is no atonement for sin but by repentance and prayer. The sacrifices were not in themselves an atonement; but being appointed by the Almighty, the only value in offering them was the compliance with the divine will. And yet there was value of some kind, even in the sight of God, in a sacrifice, because it was the offering of life. On no point did my expounder appear so confused as on this.

One day he came to me in hot haste with a question. "Suppose," said he, "if a man, a great sinner—say a thief—were by some accident disabled from following his wicked way, and then to ask pardon of God, would He forgive him?" I endeavoured to explain to him the Christian idea of the necessity of repentance and change of heart in order to be forgiven—together with the Almighty's plan of dispensing forgiveness. He seemed to comprehend what I had said, and to acquiesce in part to the doctrine; but the system of mediation and atonement he could not appreciate.

And yet to them there is a doctrine of merits—not only the merits of their own good deeds, but also those of others. I noticed in their prayers and in their serious conversation frequent reference to the merits of their ancestors, especially Moses, as a kind of substitutional merit. They look upon him as the greatest of all the prophets, and as the most faithful of all God's servants; and as such they invoke the divine clemency for the sake of his great merit.

CHAPTER III.

THE SYNAGOGUE AND ITS SERVICE.

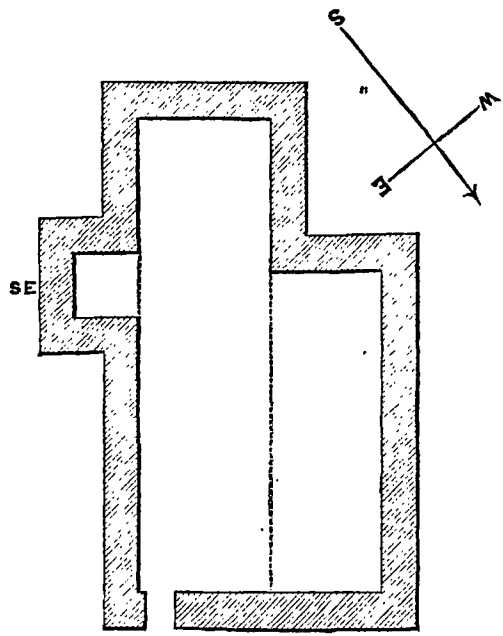
WE here adopt the better known name of synagogue for their place of worship, although the Samaritans themselves never use it. In their writings, and in their conversation, they frequently call it the *House of God* (*Bit Allah*); but the common appellation is *Kinsha* (קנשה), or place of assembly.*

The present building is not ancient; but the previous one had its date anterior to the Christian era, and was, we were told, of very superior workmanship. About 470 years ago it was wrested from the Samaritans by the Mohammedans, who converted it into a mosque, when the present building was given them instead. It is a very common and mean structure, with nothing to recommend it except its privacy. It is situate in the midst of the Samaritan quarter, standing in the corner of a garden which is surrounded by a high stone wall, and entered by a double flight of steps: the synagogue itself being secluded by another entrance into its own court. It is of a very irregular construction, and can hardly be

* Like the Hebrew *Beth Haccneseth*, and equivalent to the Greek *Synagoge*.

correctly described; but from the accompanying ground-plan the reader may form a tolerable conception of it.

The extreme length of the body of the synagogue measures 37 feet 5 inches in length, the floor of the



north-western (right-hand) division being raised about a foot higher. On the south-eastern side is a square recess of some 4 feet 3 inches.

The walls are whitewashed; at least, they have been. The ceiling is a vaulted one, from which hang two very primitive chandeliers and a small oil-lamp. In the roof there is a circular domelike window, to admit light and air, the only opening beside the door.

The recess in the south-eastern side they call *musbah*, or altar. It answers in part to the Jewish *heichel*, but differs also in part. The Samaritan idea is this:—During the time of their temple, the sacrifices were slain at the *musbah*; but now in the synagogue, since the temple is no more, the *musbah* is the place of prayer, which is offered up to the Almighty instead of sacrifice, inasmuch as sacrifice would be unlawful without a temple. The *musbah* is therefore constructed, as I was informed by Amram, according to the measurement of the Mosaic altar,* and fronting the spot where their temple stood; the worshippers looking towards it during the service, in order that their faces may be turned to Mount Gerizim. In front of the *musbah*, a large square veil hangs continually, to screen the sacred recess from the gaze of the congregation; and no one enters behind it except the two officials. The veil most commonly used is made of white damask linen, ornamented with pieces of blue, green, and red linen, sewn on it into a very handsome pattern. The veil, however, is changed according to circumstances—some being kept for certain Sabbaths, and others for different feasts; the most costly for the most sacred occasions.

It is in the *musbah* the *torah*, or the law of Moses, is kept. I hardly need say that the law implies the whole of the five books of Moses. The law being the only book admitted by the Samaritans to be divine, it

* According to the command, the altar was to measure five cubits square (Exod. xxvii 1); but the present *musbah* does not exactly tally with it.

is deposited in this sacred recess, just as the original copy was deposited in the ark of the covenant (Deut. xxxi. 26). We shall describe the sacred scroll in another chapter, merely observing here that with the Jews it is an all-important rule to read the law publicly in synagogue only from an *unpointed written roll*. The Samaritans having no printed books of their own, need no precaution with regard to a *written* copy being read; and if they had, on this point they would perfectly agree with the Jews. Their synagogue copies are all unpointed written rolls.

When a European witnesses their service for the first time, several things strike him as new and singular. In the first place, he will observe that every one who enters the synagogue takes off his shoes, and leaves them at the door outside in the court. We have already seen, in another chapter, that the manner in which the natives of all creeds show respect, is by taking off the shoes; and the Samaritans, who have transmitted to us the most ancient customs of the country, of course observe the same. But here they attach a higher and more sacred import to the custom —an obedience to the voice that commanded Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground" (Exod. iii. 5).

2. Having entered the synagogue, we observed that all the congregation, both priest and people, put on an additional garment—their religious dress, a kind of white calico gown or surplice. This they generally keep in the synagogue, and carefully put on before

joining in the service, and take it off again before retiring. The sight is imposing. It is a sign of purity, and a relic of an ancient religious costume (Rev. vi. 11; vii. 9).

3. During the service their general posture is that of sitting on the floor—a kind of squatting. This, however, is their common manner of sitting. The native Christians stand during the divine service, except the few Protestants, who, when they meet, conduct themselves like the Samaritans. During some parts of the service they all stand; and at certain other portions they all fall upon their hands and knees with their faces almost touching the ground, prostrating themselves towards the *musbah*. And here it may be remarked that the Jews never thus prostrate themselves except on the Day of Atonement; but the Samaritans observe it in their common service as well as on their festivals.

4. At certain parts of the service they stroke down their faces and beards with the right hand: this being done by all at the same moment, has a very singular appearance. And it seemed to me the more so, that neither Jews nor Christians do it; but I was told that the Mohammedans observe the same custom. It is done at the repetition of certain words and phrases, and is a sign of blessing. It may be a substitute for the Jewish custom of touching the fringes.

5. Another peculiarity at once noticeable by the European is the absence of all females. This custom, however, is not peculiar to the Samaritans, but is

common to the natives of all creeds. European Jews have their galleries, where their females may attend and listen to the service; but in the East there are no such galleries, nor is any other part of the synagogue assigned to them. If they wish to attend at all, they are at liberty to assemble outside in the court and listen to what is going on, but no more. And in this the Samaritans agree with the Jews—they have no female gallery, nor are the females considered a part of the congregation.

6. All wear their head-dress. We have already seen that they take off their shoes, as a mark of honour and respect, just as we take off our hats. They, however, keep their head-dress on; and as, in their estimation, an uncovered head betokens disrespect, they do not, willingly, allow any stranger who may happen to visit them to take off his hat during service. In this, also, they agree with the Jews, as well as with all the natives.

With regard to the idea of a congregation, however, the Samaritans differ from the Jews. With the latter there must be a *minyan*, *i.e.* ten males of full age, before a congregation can be formed; but with the Samaritans there is no definite number necessary, as they have the Christian idea that two or three met together for the purpose of worship is a lawful congregation.

Their public service may be divided into two kinds—the weekly and the annual. We shall speak of the latter when we come to discuss their calendar.

Their weekly public worship is confined to the Sabbath. In this they differ from the Jews. According to Judaism, public prayers must be said at the synagogue daily, and the rule is that all the members ought to join; but this being generally impracticable, absentees are allowed to repeat them at home or elsewhere in private. With the Samaritans, however, there is no such rule—every one says his prayers during the week-days at his own house, or wherever he may be; but they never meet at the synagogue.

On the Sabbath day they have three services. The first is a short one at sunset on Friday, at which time, as with the Jews, their Sabbath commences. The second is early on Saturday morning: this is the most important and the longest. The last is on Saturday afternoon, some time before sunset. The service consists of set prayers interspersed with portions of the Pentateuch, which are arranged into one liturgy. But the service is never read: the minister, having the whole perfectly by heart, only repeats it. The members, when they join in repeating portions of the law, generally open their written books, and read. For this purpose they have small square wooden stools, about a foot high, upon which they place the sacred volume, so that it may be lifted sufficiently high from the floor. The law is largely introduced, so that the whole is read through once a year; and those portions which refer to the Sabbath are introduced weekly. In addition to which, Amram told me that he made it a rule to read the law through once a month privately.

An important part in the Sabbath service is the exhibition of the law. The minister takes it out of the *musbah*, removes its covering, opens the silver-gilt case in which it is deposited, and exhibits to the congregation that column of the roll which contains Aaron's blessing (Num. vi. 24–27), when, generally, they step forward to kiss the sacred scroll.

The language of the service is all Hebrew. But this being a dead language, the people understand the service but very imperfectly, the officers and one or two others excepted.
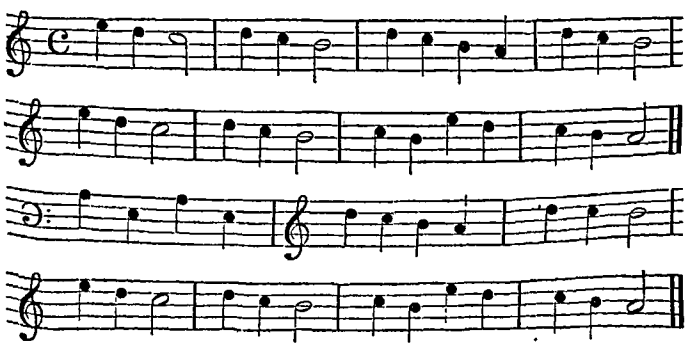
The character of the service is very peculiar. Upon the whole, it is more decorous than that of other natives, whether Mohammedans, Jews, or Christians, with the exception of the few Protestants. I never saw among them the wild, violent, and barbarous scenes which I witnessed in other places of worship; and I have heard Amram, more than once, rebuke his people publicly for irregular conduct, such as talking or inattention during the service. The style of their worship, however, is anything but pleasant. The officiating minister, whether he be Amram or Yacub, stands in front of the *musbah*, repeats the service in a loud and violent manner—sometimes in plain reading, and sometimes in a kind of chant or singing, and always with an intonation and style of voice which one cannot describe by words, peculiar to them as a people. During those parts of the service where much emphasis is required he makes a kind of jerk forward with his head, accompanied with a peculiar barking voice, as if attempting

to bite something in front of him. Every now and then the congregation join in with him in the same style. I have seen them on some particular occasions, happening to keep good time, uttering the syllables in one united but harsh voice—just like a succession of staccato musical notes, on the same degree: then the noise became really stunning. In addition to all this, the whole service is gone through with great rapidity, as if the grand object were to finish it. And no wonder; being in an unknown tongue, it cannot arrest the thoughts nor interest the understanding. I suggested once to Amram that a slower reading and quieter style would be more profitable; to which he replied, that the congregation, having been accustomed to this manner, would not be pleased with any other.

We have already mentioned that the Samaritans chant or sing a part of their service; we shall now add a few words on that subject.

Those Europeans who have any tolerable idea of music, and have passed through the country, must have been struck by the peculiar character of the Arab songs. They differ from ours in their versification as well as in their music. With the former we have nothing to do at present, and we can but touch upon the latter; for to attempt a full explanation would require a very lengthy essay, incompatible with the object of these pages. Suffice it to say that the Arab music is formed on a scale essentially different from our own. According to our European scale, the octave, or succession of eight sounds, consists of two

semitones and six whole tones. In the major mode the semitones fall in between the third and the fourth, and between the seventh and the eighth, from the key-note; and in the minor mode between the second and third, and between the fifth and sixth. The semitones thus falling in, impart a certain character to European music; according to which the European voice and ear are trained. It is not so, however, with Arab music—their octave is altogether different; hence the essential difference in the character of the two styles. I only noticed one melody throughout the country having a marked European resemblance. It was at Jerusalem. It was in the minor mode, and had a very pleasing effect. At midnight, during the month of Ramadan, the garrison struck it up, the stillness of the night heightening its charm. The second night after my arrival I was awakened by the music; and being very much pleased with the melody, I struck a light and wrote it down :—
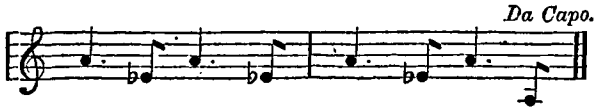


I heard them play it repeatedly afterwards with an

attempt at harmony, but it was a most wretched affair. I made several inquiries regarding the nationality of the melody, but could obtain no information. But, as already remarked, the Arab melodies, generally, have nothing in common with those of Europe. Any musical European may satisfy himself on this point in two ways. In the first place, let him try to write their music according to our notation, and he will find it impossible to express it correctly. Their arrangement of the octave makes it incompatible with our mode of writing musical sounds; and it imparts to their melodies a colouring which our notation cannot convey. Or let him, secondly, go to a native singer, and let them sing together some European melody, or the octave, either in the major or the minor mode; and he will find it to be the greatest difficulty, in fact an impossibility, without immense training, to get him to sing the intervals according to our scale. My attention was first called to this fact whilst giving lessons to a native, who was anxious to learn our music. Nor can the Europeans sing their melodies without infinite practice, the progression being so different to our own. Perhaps our cultivation of harmony disqualifies our ears from rightly appreciating their melodious passages, as well as our voices from executing them.

The Samaritan music differs essentially from the Arab, and has evidently a source of its own. It is much more sedate, not having those wild passages, nor so much of the enharmonic progressions which belong to the latter. Any one accustomed to music cannot fail

to notice the difference. Upon the whole, it moves within a limited scale; containing but few notes above or below the key-note, and moving principally upon the fourth, or some other principal note. To this simple movement, however, flourishes are now and then added, not essential to the melody, which are sometimes most unmusical. As an example, we shall attempt to reduce one of them into common notation. It is one most commonly used on the Sabbath and the festivals; and consists of a wave-like movement on the tonic and dominant.

The essential notes, so far as they can be represented, would stand nearly thus:—



But the E flat was introduced by grace notes that cannot be written, and the lower A ending the phrase was reached by a succession of chromatic or rather enharmonic grace notes, which gave a most peculiar colouring to the whole movement. After two or three repetitions, a cadence far more peculiar was introduced —a kind of rapid wild shout, ending in a high note, but baffling all attempt at notation.

There are seventy such melodies, composed, according to the Samaritan tradition, by the seventy elders of Israel in the time of Moses. These elders, we are told, were all musicians, and each one composed a melody which has been preserved by the nation to this time.

They are all set to certain portions of the ritual, and are introduced in their proper places on Sabbath days, and the festivals. I could not discover upon what principle this adaptation was made, or whether there was any principle at all in the matter. The Oriental idea that music has medicinal effects—that the various melodies had each its peculiar influence in removing bodily and mental disorders—led the ancients to classify them according to those qualities. Whether this notion had anything to do with the arrangement of the Samaritan melodies I could not make out.

They have no musical instrument of any kind, nor are they given to practise the art of music in any way except in their worship. On all other occasions they engage the Mohammedans to sing, play, and dance for them. I need hardly add that the Samaritans have no kind of musical notation, and preserve their melodies only by tradition. In this they differ from the Jews, who have used their accents as musical signs in the cantilation of the law.

CHAPTER IV.*

THE SABBATH AND NEW MOON.

THE Samaritans, like the Jews, reckon their days, not as we do, from midnight to midnight, but from sunset to sunset, according to the expression in Genesis, "And the evening and the morning were the first day," &c. Their Sabbath, therefore, commences at sunset on Friday, and ends at sunset on Saturday. We have already seen how the Sabbath is spent in the synagogue, and what service is performed there; let us now see how it is generally observed in their houses; because they never leave them on the Sabbath but to go to the synagogue.

By them it is kept most strictly as a day of rest—that is, a day upon which no manner of work is to be done. They adhere literally to the words of the law, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates"

(Exod. xx. 8–10). From this rule there is no deviation. Let us note a few things.

In the first place, they never engage servants or assistants of another faith to do any prohibited work for them. They have no *goim*, like the Jews, to light their fire or snuff their candles; but hold it to be a sacred duty that *all* within their gates should keep the Sabbath alike. The consequence is, they never have any fire on the Sabbath, according to the command, "Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day" (Exod. xxxv. 3). Nor do they even burn a lamp or candle in their houses or in the synagogue—holding that this is equally implied in the commandment. When the Sabbath comes in on the Friday evening, they finish the service for the evening without light; and remain in their houses, repeating parts of their service, or holding conversation, in entire darkness, until they retire. This is especially the case in the winter season, when the day is shortest. They have, therefore, no cause for discussion, with the Mishnic authors, as to what kind of wick the lamps may be lighted with on the Sabbath.

Again, they have no code of rabbinical laws, such as the Jewish *ngeruvim*, by which the rigour of the *Torah* can be alleviated; but they accept all the laws of Moses in their simple and literal meaning, and so obey them. Consequently, they not only avoid all kinds of labour, but also the least manipulation. As an example, I may mention that one Sabbath I received letters from friends in Jerusalem, inclosing one to Amram, and

handed it to him at the close of the morning service. He, however, could not open it, because it was Sabbath; but when opened, there was no objection to his reading it.

This leads us to remark further, that the law does not prescribe limits to their conversation—in fact, it has nothing at all to do with it. None of the commandments, we were told, refer to thoughts or words, only to deeds. They have no idea that the law of God refers to the spirit—that the Sabbath regards the inward, as well as the outward man. To them, the language of the prophet has as little meaning as it has authority: "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words," &c. (Isa. lviii. 13). But, before or after the service, whether in the synagogue or out of it, they all feel, from the priest down to the commonest, at full liberty to speak on any topic whatever. They abstain from buying and selling, because that would involve the idea of action. The great idea of keeping holy the Sabbath with them, is to remain quiet—never to go out of their dwellings, except to the synagogue.* And this the Samaritan obeys, and must obey, whatever

* The Sabbath day's journey—σαββατον ὁδὸς (Acts i. 12)—they ignore as an innovation; and heartily deride the rabbinic modification of the law as set forth in the Mishna (Erubin), which they seem to know.

may be the consequence. Were his flock stolen away by thieves, or were his house on fire, or even were his life in danger, he dare not and would not act in any way to defend himself or his property.

There is one other way in which they are careful to observe the Sabbath—namely, the table department. They feel it a duty to live more generously on the Sabbath than on ordinary days. This they do in honour of the day. I could not learn that they had any peculiar Sabbath dish; only the table is better provided than on week-days. The cooking is done on Friday morning; but no means are adopted to keep the food warm till the morrow.

The Jewish ceremonies of *Kidush*, at the coming in of the Sabbath, and of *Habdallah*, at its going out, are not observed by the Samaritans.

Next to the Sabbath observance comes that of the new moon in frequency, but not in importance. This they call *Reosh Hadesh*.

As soon as the new moon makes its appearance, which is sacredly watched, the following afternoon, about half-past four, they assemble in the synagogue to perform the appointed service. It consists of certain prayers, composed for the occasion, intermixed with portions of the law, especially those referring to the beginnings of the months (Num. x. 10; xxviii. 11–14). These are read, or rather recited, by the minister, who, during the service, exhibits one of the roll copies of the law to the congregation. The whole service lasts about two hours. This monthly service is performed,

we were told, not in honour of the moon, either in itself or as a representation of the Deity, but simply as a season appointed by divine command for the worship of God as the author of all things. I remarked that no outdoor ceremonies were observed on the occasion, such as the Jews have; and Amram assured me that the Samaritans never perform any.

CHAPTER V.

THE SAMARITAN YEAR.

THE Samaritan year, like the Jewish, consists of twelve lunar months, each having twenty-nine or thirty days. The commencement of the month is determined by the conjunction of the sun and moon. If the conjunction happens during the night, or before the midday following, that day is reckoned the first of the month; but if it happens about midday, or later, the first of the month begins on the morrow. If the conjunction be lunar, the month has only twenty-nine days; but if solar, it has thirty days. It is well known that the difference between the lunar and solar months would occasion, in a cycle of nineteen years, a complete reversal of the months of the year. To prevent this, the Samaritans, like the Jews, introduce during that period an intercalary month seven times, and thus make each of these intercalary years to consist of thirteen months. They fix and regulate the year by the Greek calendar. Thus, if the conjunction takes place during the eleventh day of the month Adar, or sooner than that day, the year is an

intercalendared one, and has thirteen months; then the month that follows that is the beginning of the new year. But if it takes place on the twelfth day of Adar, or later, that month is the beginning of the new year, and the closing year is a common one of twelve months. The point, therefore, that regulates the Samaritan year, is the conjunction that takes place during the month Adar, which partly answers to our April.

It appears very evident that the arrangement of the year must have been substantially the same in ancient times, because the Jewish year was an agrarian year, corresponding to the productions of the land, and their feasts were celebrated in accordance therewith. Therefore, an intercalary month must have been introduced for the purpose of making the year answer to the seasons;* otherwise, the Feast of Pentecost (*Shavungoth*), for example, ordained to be kept at harvest-time, would, in a few years, have receded into the winter months.

The ancient mode of determining the beginning of the months, and consequently of arranging the year, was by watching the first appearance of the new moon. For this purpose witnesses were stationed in different parts of the country, to report to the Sanhedrin, and that body decided accordingly.† The same mode of fixing the months and year was followed by the Samaritans.

* The first direct mention of an intercalary month as a second Adar in the Mishnah, compiled in the second century of the Christian era. —*Megillah*, i. 4.

† Mishnah, *Rosh Hashanah*.

This mode, however, eventually gave way to astronomical calculations. Rab Ada, the Babylonian, about the end of the second century, made most careful calculations, by which, ever since, the Jews have been principally guided. The Samaritans, also, have had their astronomers, and have followed, at different times, more than one authority. The latest that wrote upon the subject was Abraham Elaiah, during the last century; but the calculations they follow are those of Phineas the astronomer: from his tables the calendar is annually fixed. In former years, when the Samaritans were dwelling in different parts of Syria and Egypt, a table every six months (in Tishri and Nisan) was prepared by the priest at Nablûs, and sent to the different communities,* in order that they might know the exact time for keeping the Sabbath, the New Moon, and festivals; but now, as they all dwell together at Nablus, no such table is necessary. The last of such tables ever written was sent by Shalmah, father of the present priest, in the year 1820, to his supposed brethren in Europe, for their instruction and guidance. It is in itself curious and interesting as a specimen of Samaritan calculation; and as it is, most probably, the last document of its kind that ever will be drawn up by a Samaritan priest, I shall here subjoin it.

* We learn from the Mishnah that the same practice was observed by the Jews before astronomical calculations were adopted. Messengers were sent by the Sanhedrin, in the months of Tishri and Nisan, to the distant communities in Syria, to inform them of the regulation of the festivals. — *Rosh Hashanah*, i. 4.

A Table of the New Moons.

Conjunction of the seventh month at 16½ h. of the Sunday: that is to say, the Monday,* the 8th of the Greek Elul.† The day of the great fast: on it is the eclipse of the moon.

Conjunction of Muharram,‡ of the Arab (Mohammedan) year 1235, at 9½ h. of the evening of Tuesday, the 6th of Tishrin, the 1st of the Greeks.

Conjunction of Saphar at 11½ h. of Wednesday: that is, Thursday, the 6th of Tishrin, the 2nd of the Greeks.

Conjunction of Rabia the 1st, at 11½ h. of the evening of Friday, the 1st of Canun the 1st.

Conjunction of Rabia the 2nd, at 11¾ h. of Saturday: that is, the Sunday before the 4th of Canun the 2nd.

* It must be borne in mind, in order to follow the calculation, that the Samaritans, like the Jews, reckon each day from even to even, so that the Sunday night would be, in reality, a part of Monday.

† The Samaritans regulate their year by the Greek year. The governing point is the Passover, by which the other feasts are fixed, and it is never celebrated till the first of the Greek Nisan is come. So the Passover never takes place before the 1st of the Greek April. This is the reason why it is so much later sometimes than at other times. The Greek months are as follow:

Elul	= September.
Tishrin 1	= October.
Tishrin 2	= November.
Canun 1	= December.
Canun 2	= January.
Shebat	= February.
Adar	= March.
Nisan	= April.
Iyar	= May.
Haziram	= June.
Tammuz	= July.
Ab	= August.

‡ The Mohammedan months, as is seen, are used.

Conjunction of Djumada the 1st, at $8\frac{5}{6}$ h. of the evening of Monday, before the 2nd of Shebat.

Conjunction of Djumada the 2nd, at 8 h. of the Tuesday before the 3rd of Adar, that is to say, the solar Adar. On that day there will be an eclipse of the moon at 17 h. of the night.

Conjunction of Redjeb at $4\frac{1}{2}$ h. of the evening of Thursday, before the 1st of Nisan, solar. The Feast of the Passover will take place this month. On Thursday night, at midnight, we will eat the victim on Mount Gerizim.

Conjunction of Schaban at 3 h. on Friday before the 30th of Nisan, a month which commences on Thursday. In this month will be the immolation of the second paschal sacrifice, for those who for valid reasons could not celebrate it at the ordinary time.

Conjunction of Ramadan at 2 h. less $\frac{1}{5}$ the night of Sunday, the morning of which answers to the Sabbath of Amalek, before the 30th of Iyar.

Conjunction of Schawal at $2\frac{1}{10}$ h. of Monday, 27th of Haziram, which commences on Tuesday, and has thirty days.

Conjunction of Dhulkaada at 3 h. of the evening of Wednesday, before the 28th of Tammuz, which commences on Thursday, and has thirty-one days.

Conjunction of Dhulhiddja at $7\frac{2}{3}$ h. of Thursday, before the 27th of Ab, which commences on Sunday, and has thirty-one days.

Conjunction of Muharram, of the Arab year 1236,

at $1\frac{1}{10}$ h. of Saturday, before the 25th of Elul. In this month is the great fast, the Feast of all the Blessings, the Feast of the Retreat; and the 1st of this month is the Feast of the Commemoration of Trumpets.

Conjunction of Saphar, at $5\frac{1}{2}$ h. of the evening of Monday, before the 22nd of Tishri the 1st, which commences on Friday, and has thirty-one days.

Conjunction of Rebia the 1st, at $10\frac{1}{4}$ h. of Tuesday, that is to say, Wednesday, before the 24th of Tishri 2nd.

Conjunction of Rebia the 2nd, at $\frac{1}{2}$ h. of Thursday, before the 23rd of Canun the 1st.

Conjunction of Djumada 1st, at $1\frac{1}{2}$ h. and $\frac{1}{10}$ of the evening of Saturday, before the 22nd of Canun 2nd.

Conjunction of Djumada 2nd, at 11 h. on the evening of Sunday before the 20th of Shebat, of which the first day is Tuesday, and which has twenty-eight days.

Conjunction of Redjeb, at $9\frac{1}{2}$ h. on Monday, that is to say, the Tuesday before the 22nd of Adar, of which the first day is Tuesday, and which has thirty-one days. In this month is the Feast of Easter, and the immolation of the victims on Mount Gerizim, which is the house of God.

Conjunction of Schaban, at $4\frac{1}{4}$ h. of the evening of Wednesday, before the 10th of Nisan.

Conjunction of Ramadan, at $1\frac{1}{4}$ h. of Tuesday the 19th of Iyar.

Conjunction of Schawal, at $10\frac{1}{2}$ h. of Friday, that is

to say, of Saturday, called the Saturday of Amalek, before the 27th of Haziran.

Conjunction of Dhulkaada, at $8\frac{1}{2}$ h. of Sunday evening, before the 18th of Tammuz, of which the first day is Friday, and which has thirty-one days.

Conjunction of Muharram, of the Arab year 1237, at $1\frac{1}{10}$ h. of Tuesday, before the 14th of Elul. In this month is the great fast, the fast on which they ask pardon for shameful sins, those of the Commemoration of Trumpets, and of the Pilgrimage.

It is necessary here to bear in mind that the Samaritans, like the Jews, have two kinds of years, one civil, the other ecclesiastical, the former commencing with the month Tishri, and the latter with the month Nisan. All chronological dates and events, together with the common matters of life, are regulated by the civil year; but religious observances are according to the ecclesiastical year.

The Samaritan months do not correspond with ours, and moreover, being lunar, they vary continually. The subjoined table, however, will give the reader a general idea of the Samaritan year as compared with our own. The names of the months common to Jews and Samaritans, I have given in the Hebrew letters, but have written according to the Samaritan orthography, which differs from that of the Jews in some of the names, as will be seen. I have also added the Samaritan pronunciation.

1. תשרי .	Tishri . .	corresponding with parts of		October / Novemb
2. מרחשבן	Mareshban	,,	,,	Novemb.. / December.
3. כסלים .	Kislim . .	,,	,,	December / January.
4. טיבת .	Tibat . .	,,	,,	January / February.
5. שבט .	Shabat . .	,,	,,	February / March.
6. הדר . .	Adar . .	,,	,,	March / April.
7. ניסן . .	Nisan . .	,,	,,	April / May.
8. היאר . .	Aiar . .	,,	,,	May / June.
9. סיבן . .	Siban . .	,,	,,	June / July.
10. תמוז . .	Tamuth . .	,,	,,	July / August.
11. אב . . .	Ab . . .	,,	,,	August / September.
12. אילול .	Ailul . .	,,	,,	September / October.

CHAPTER VI.

SAMARITAN FEASTS—THE PASSOVER, ETC.

THE most important feast in the Samaritan calendar is the Passover, *Karaban Aphsah*. It is the memorial of their great national deliverance from Egypt and its bondage, and of the mercy of the Eternal to their firstborn, when the destroying angel *passed by* the houses that had the blood of the paschal lamb on the two side-posts and lintel (Exod. xii.). These sacred associations impart to this feast, beyond all others, a charm as well as a significance to those who feel themselves to be the only people of God worthy to celebrate it.

The time of its celebration is the fifteenth day of the month Nisan, in the evening of the day, *i. e.* according to their mode of calculating. But should that day happen to be a Sabbath, the feast is held on the previous day.

The place where it should be kept is Mount Gerizim. To keep it there they hold to be of great importance, partly because the first sacrifice of the redeemed people was intended to be made in the wilderness

(Exod. iii. 18); but especially to conform with the command, "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: but at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in" (Deut. xvi. 5, 6), which they believe to be Mount Gerizim. This they were prevented from doing by the Mohammedans for about forty years, having to celebrate it in their own quarter in the city; but now for twenty years or more their right of going up to the top of the mountain has been restored to them, chiefly, I believe, through the influence of Mr. Finn, the English consul at Jerusalem.

On the tenth day of the month the sacrificial lambs are bought. These may be either kids of goats or lambs; the latter being generally, if not at all times, chosen. They must be a year old, males, and "without blemish." The number must be according to the number of persons who are likely to be able to keep the feast. At present they are five or six, as the case may be. During the following days, which are days of preparation, these are carefully kept, and cleanly washed —a kind of purification to fit them for the paschal service; a rite, in all probability, always observed in connection with the temple service (John v. 1).

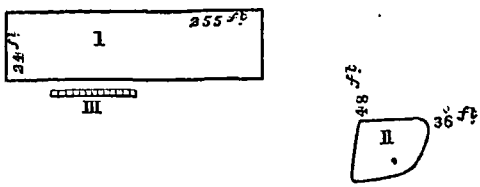
Early on the morning of the fourteenth day, the whole community, with few exceptions, close their dwellings in the city, and clamber up Mount Gerizim; and on the top of this their most sacred mountain, pitch their tents in a circular form, there to celebrate the most national of all their solemnities.

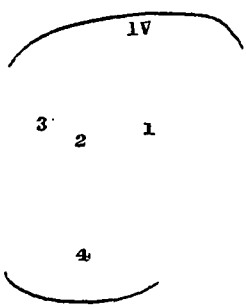
During my stay at Nablus in the beginning of 1860, I was invited by Amram to spend the days of the coming feast with him in his own tent, which I was partly able to accept. After I had witnessed the Christian ceremonies during the Easter week in Jerusalem, I returned to Nablus in time to witness the Samaritan Passover, and I cannot do better (to explain the whole feast) than relate simply and briefly what I then saw; merely premising that the fifteenth of the month happened to fall that year on Saturday, the Samaritan Sabbath; consequently, the Passover had to be held on the previous day (Friday, May 4), which caused the proceedings to be gone through at an earlier hour than usual, so that the celebration might be finished before the Sabbath came in.

I and the friends who had joined me at Jerusalem, had pitched our tent in the valley, at the foot of Gerizim; and on the morning of the 4th of May we clambered up the mountain. On reaching the encampment friendly voices greeted us from several tents, and having visited those best known to us, we rested for awhile with our friend Amram. Presently we took a stroll up to the temple ruins, and from thence had a perfect view of the interesting scene.

I had arranged with the Rev. W. M. Jones, of America, then at Jerusalem, to come with his photographic apparatus, and take a photograph of the scene, but he was unfortunately prevented. The tents, ten in number, were arranged in a kind of circle, to face the highest point of the mountain, where their ancient

temple stood, but now lying in ruins. Within a radius of a few hundred yards from the place where I stood, clustered all the spots which make Gerizim to them the





I. Temple ruins, page 18.
II. Holy rock, page 21.
III. Joshua stones, page 23.
IV. Place of the Passover.
1. Place where the lambs are eaten.
2. Hole where the water is boiled.
3. Oven where the lambs are roasted.
4. Place where the tents are pitched.
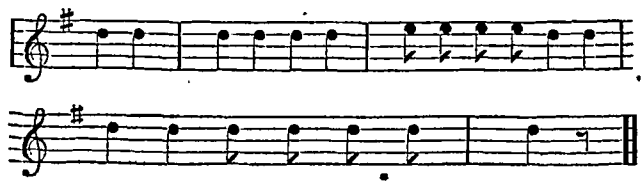
most sacred mountain, the house of God. Under my feet was the ruined wall of their famous temple; a little on my left, to the south, were the seven steps of Adam out of Paradise; still a little farther southward, was the place of the offering of Isaac; close by it,

westward, was the rock of the Holy Place; and just by the wall upon which I stood, north-westward, were the celebrated Joshua stones. A few hundred yards westward was their encampment, in front of which stood the platform for the celebration of their Holy Feast, and which many ages of solemnization has rendered to them most sacred.

About half-past ten, the officials went forth to kindle the fire to roast the lambs. For this purpose, a circular pit is sunk in the earth, about six feet deep and three feet in diameter, and built around with loose stones. In this a fire, made of dry heather, and briars, &c., was kindled, during which time Yacub stood upon a large stone, and offered up a prayer suited for the occasion. Another fire was then kindled in a kind of sunken trough, close by the platform where the service was to be performed. Over this, two caldrons full of water were placed, and a short prayer offered.

Returning to Amram's tent for a short time to regale ourselves with lemonade, about half an hour before midday the whole male population assembled to commence the regular service. There were forty-eight adults, besides women and children; the women and the little ones remaining in the tents. The congregation were in their ordinary dress, with the exception of the two officers and two or three of the elders, who were dressed in their white robes, as in the synagogue. A carpet was laid on the ground near the boiling caldrons, where Yacub stood to read the service, assisted by some of the elders—all turning their

faces towards the site of the temple. Six lambs now made their appearance, in the custody of five young men who drove them. These young men were dressed in blue robes * of unbleached calico, having their loins girded. Yacub, whilst repeating the service, stood on a large stone in front of the people, with his face towards them. This part of the service was chanted, it being a repetition of the words on the fifth and sixth of the key, after their peculiar intonation :—



At midday, the service had reached the place where the account of the paschal sacrifice is introduced: "And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening" (Exod. xii. 6); when, in an instant, one of the lambs was thrown on its back by the blue-clad young men, and the *shochet*, one of their number, with his flashing knife, did the murderous work with rapidity. I stood close by on purpose to see whether he would conform to the rabbinical rules; but the work was done so quickly that I could observe nothing more than that he made two cuts. The other lambs were despatched in the same manner. Whilst the six were thus lying together, with their blood

* When Dr. Stanley witnessed the ceremony in 1862 they had *white* robes.—App. to "Sermons in the East," p. 176.

streaming from them, and in their last convulsive struggles, the young *shochetim* dipped their fingers in the blood, and marked a spot on the foreheads and noses of the children. The same was done to some of the females; but to none of the male adults. The whole male congregation now came up close to the reader; they embraced and kissed one another, in congratulation that the lambs of their redemption had been slain.

Next came the fleecing of the lambs—the service still continuing. The young men now carefully poured the boiling water over them, and plucked off their fleeces. Each lamb was then lifted up, with its head downwards, to drain off the remaining blood. The right fore-legs, which belonged to the priest, were removed, and placed on the wood, already laid for the purpose, together with the entrails, and salt added, and then burnt; but the liver was carefully replaced. The inside being sprinkled with salt, and the hamstrings carefully removed, the next process was that of spitting. For this purpose, they had a long pole, which was thrust through from head to tail, near the bottom of which was a transverse peg, to prevent the body from slipping off.*

The lambs were now carried to the oven, which

* It is curious to observe that Justin Martyr, a native of Nablus, in the second century, says, that they then roasted the lambs on a spit in the form of a cross—one spit thrust, as above narrated, from head to tail, and another through the breast, to which the fore feet were attached.—Dial. cum Tryph. c. 40. He undoubtedly had witnessed the ceremony, and relates what he had seen. In modern times, however, the fore feet are not thus attached; and the spit has lost that peculiar resemblance to a cross which it then had. It is

was by this time well heated. Into this they were carefully lowered, so that the sacrifices might not be defiled by coming into contact with the oven itself. This accomplished, a hurdle, prepared for the purpose, was placed over the mouth of the oven, well covered with moistened earth, to prevent any of the heat escaping. By this time, it was about two o'clock, and this part of the service was ended.

At sunset, the service was recommenced. All the male population, with the lads, assembled around the oven. A large copper dish, filled with unleavened cakes and bitter herbs rolled up together, was held by Phineas Ben Isaac, nephew of the priest; when, presently, all being assembled, he distributed them among the congregation.* The hurdle was then removed, and the lambs drawn up one by one; but, unfortunately, one fell off the spit, and was taken up with difficulty. Their appearance was anything but inviting, they being burnt as black as ebony. Carpets were spread ready to receive them; they were then removed to the platform where the service was read. Being strewn over with bitter herbs, the congregation stood in two files, the lambs being in a line between them. Most of the adults had now a kind of rope

nevertheless a fair representation of what the ancient custom was amongst the Jews as well as Samaritans; for, in the Mishnah, we are told—1. That the spit was to be made of the wood of the pomegranate-tree; and 2, that to roast it on an iron spit, or on a grid-iron, was unlawful (Pesachim, vii. 1, 2).

* "With unleavened bread and bitter herbs shall they eat it" (Exod. xii. 8).

around the waist, and staves in their hands, and all had their shoes on. "Thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand" (Exod. xii. 11). The service was now performed by Amram, which continued for about fifteen minutes; and when he had repeated the blessing, the congregation at once stooped,* and, as if in haste and hunger, tore away the blackened masses piecemeal with their fingers, carrying portions to the females and little ones in the tents. In less than ten minutes the whole, with the exception of a few fragments, had disappeared. These were gathered and placed on the hurdle, and the area carefully examined, every crumb picked up, together with the bones, and all burnt over a fire kindled for the purpose in a trough, where the water had been boiled. "And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire" (Exod. xii. 10). Whilst the flames were blazing and consuming the remnant of the paschal lambs, the people returned cheerfully to their tents.

Those of the community who, from illness or from any other cause (as females in their months), are unable to observe the Passover in its proper season, may do so on the same day of the following month, that is, in the month Iyar.† The second Passover is not now celebrated on Mount Gerizim.

* When Dr. Stanley witnessed the ceremony, they all sat to eat.

† The same rule was observed by the ancient Jews.—Mishnah (Pesachim, vii. 6).

Connected with the Passover, and second to it only in importance, is their *Mocd Aphsa*, or the Feast of Unleavened Bread. These, strictly speaking, are two distinct solemnities—the Passover commemorating the protection granted to them when the firstborn of the Egyptians were slain; and the Unleavened Bread commemorating the beginning of their march out of Egypt. But being so intimately connected in time and circumstances, both are generally looked upon as one feast—the Feast of the Passover.

On the eve of the thirteenth day of the month, each family has to remove all leavened bread out of its dwelling, and the most careful search is made, so that the smallest fragment may not remain. Consequently, by the evening of the fourteenth day leavened bread and fermented drink are laid aside, and unleavened bread only must be used during the seven following days. "On the fourteenth day of the month at even, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one and twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land. Ye shall eat nothing leavened; in all your habitations shall ye eat unleavened bread" (Exod. xii. 18–20).

The bread used for the feast they call *masat*, the Samaritan pronunciation of the Hebrew *matsoth;* and this bread is exactly the same as the Jewish *matsoth*, except that it is a little larger. I must therefore

refer the reader for a full account of it to my "British Jews." The Samaritans, like the strict Jews, hang up some of the cakes in their houses till the next Passover. They act, we were told, as a charm, warding off evils, and drawing many blessings upon the family.

The first and last days of the feast are kept holy, when no work is done nor any business transacted. "And in the first day there shall be an holy convocation, and in the seventh day there shall be an holy convocation to you; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every man must eat, that only may be done of you" (Exod. xii. 16). The seventh day, however, is the greater of the two. Early in the morning of that day, they form themselves into a procession and clamber up Mount Gerizim, in honour of the Almighty. Having reached the sacred spot, the priest then recites the service for the day, which consists of lengthy portions of the law, interspersed with prayers and songs. Much importance is attached to the recital of the blessing of Jacob to his son Joseph. "The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren" (Gen. xlix. 26). These everlasting hills, of course, are Mount Gerizim with its heights; and they, being the children of Joseph, receive from the mouth of the priest the assurance of the rich blessings.

On the third day of the month Iyar, a feast is held to commemorate the giving of the law on Mount

Sinai. It is considered, however, an inferior celebration, and not of divine institution, and it demands no further notice here.

On the sixth day of the month Sivan, they keep the feast *Hhamsin*, or Pentecost, which means "the fiftieth." It is thus called because it falls upon the fiftieth day after the morrow of the Sabbath of the Unleavened Bread. And here we must observe that the Samaritans differ from the Jews in calculating these days. The latter begin to number them from the second day of the Unleavened Bread, on whatever day of the week it may happen; but the Samaritans commence on the morrow of the Sabbath which falls within the days of that feast, and quote, as their authority, the words of the law, "Ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days" (Lev. xxiii. 15, 16).

The day is kept with a view to the harvest—a day to "rejoice before the Lord their God," on account of the bounties of his providence, and the liberty to enjoy them in their own promised land. It is therefore enjoined upon the whole community, "Thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that is within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that are among you, in the place which the Lord thy God hath chosen to place his name there" (Deut. xvi. 11). This place, in Samaritan estimation, is Mount Gerizim.

The day is kept as a holy convocation, when no manner of work is done. During the day they proceed up Gerizim in procession, "in honour of God," where the priest repeats the service for the day, which is, as usual, a lengthy one, and contains all the references made in the law to the harvest, as well as prayers and songs. Much prominence is given in this service to the reading of the decalogue, when candles are lighted and held near the priest during the reading.

The seventh month, Tishri, is with the Samaritans, as with the Jews, the commencement of the civil year. The first day of the month they keep as a feast, as commanded: "In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation" (Lev. xxiii. 24). With them, however, the sound of the trumpet (*shophar*) is not heard in the synagogue as with the Jews, but the day has a peculiar reference to that month which is called "the Month of Expiation." It is a day of repose in which no servile work is done. They all attend synagogue, as on Sabbath, to join in a service prepared for the day, and which lasts for about six hours.

On the tenth day of this month is celebrated the great day of atonement, as commanded in the law: "On the tenth day of this seventh month there shall be a day of atonement: it shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall afflict your souls, and offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord. And ye shall do no work in that same day: for it is a day of atonement, to make an atonement for you before the Lord your

God. For whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people. Ye shall do no manner of work: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. It shall be unto you a sabbath of rest, and ye shall afflict your souls: in the ninth day of the month at even, from even unto even, shall ye rest" (Lev. xxiii. 27–32, marg.).

In a strictly religious point of view, this is the most important day in the Samaritan calendar. But here let it be understood that they offer no sacrifice of any kind, either in public or in private, except prayer. So I was assured by Amram.

On the ninth day, just two hours before sunset, all the community, both male and female, purify themselves by the free application of clean running water; after which they partake of the last meal before the great fast. This must be finished at least half an hour before sunset. Having finished the meal, the most rigid fast is observed until half an hour after sunset on the following day; making altogether, a fast of twenty-five hours. During this time, neither man, nor woman, nor child—not even the sick or suckling—is permitted to taste either a bit of bread or a drop of water. No indulgence, however trifling it may be, is thought of; but the whole fast is observed with such rigour that even medicine would on no account be administered. The day is therefore looked to with no little anxiety.

About half an hour before sunset they assemble at the synagogue, when the service for the day commences, and is kept up uninterruptedly, in solemn darkness, all night. This service consists of the reading of the Pentateuch, together with prayers and supplications adapted for the occasion. These are repeated by the priest Amram and his nephew alternately, and occasionally by one of the congregation. And here we may observe that these two officers are so well versed in their ritual that they are able to repeat any portion or the whole of the law, as well as their other service books, with the greatest ease and readiness, and are never at a loss for the right word. The greater portion of the service is simply read, but many parts are sung to their ancient airs.

The following morning they form themselves in a procession, and visit the tombs of some of their prophets—as hereafter described—where they repeat a part of the service. On their return about noon, the service is resumed in the synagogue as before.

As the service draws to a close, the great ceremony of the day takes place—the exhibition of the law: the ancient roll believed by them to be written by Abishua, the great-grandson of Aaron. Just as the Jew feels the greatest anxiety to hear the blowing of the *shophar*, so does the Samaritan to witness this greatly revered copy of the law. The two officers withdraw from the congregation behind the veil, and, having dressed themselves in green robes, they bring out the ancient copy, with another second to it in point of veneration;

These they place on a high stand in front of the *musbah;* and, after repeating certain passages of the law, &c., referring to the *Torah*, the officers withdraw again, and dress themselves in their usual holy garments —white flowing gowns. They now reappear in the character of priests, with their heads and bodies enveloped in white. The two rolls are then uncovered and taken out of their cases, when the priests, turning their backs to the congregation and their faces to the *musbah*, lift up the rolls over their heads, so that the congregation may have a fair sight of them; and deliver the Aaronic blessings contained in the column of the scroll exposed to view. All are now anxious to kiss or touch the sacred roll,* such an opportunity only occurring once a year.

* Mr. Grove was fortunate enough to witness the observance of this solemn day, and has given a most interesting account of the proceedings, to which I refer the reader. I cannot forbear, however, from quoting the following:—"When at length the two great songs, with which Deuteronomy concludes, had been reached, there was a general stir, and a movement towards the front of the sanctuary. The priests came forth from behind the red veil, clad in dresses of very light green satin down to the feet, and the recitations proceeded with greater clamour and impetuosity than ever. Then the two great rolls, which, according to the Samaritans themselves, have stood to them in place of the ancient glories of their temple since its destruction, and have certainly been the desire and the despair of European scholars since Scaliger's time, were brought forth enveloped in coverings of light blue velvet, and placed on the sloping stand in the centre of the recess. At last the law was ended amidst a perfect tumult, by the reiteration of one syllable—*ah* or *lah*—at least thirty times. Then the two priests again emerged from behind the curtain, this time with a white cloth or shawl covering the head, and reaching nearly to the knees; they put off the velvet coverings and exposed the cases of the rolls to view. That to the right was bright silver, and evidently of modern make; the other puzzled me more. It was too

The sacred treasures being replaced, the service con-

distant for me to see any of its details, but the whole effect struck me as that of Veneto-oriental work, of the time of those fine silver and silver-gilt articles which have been lately reproduced by Elkington. The sequel will show what it really is. This was the signal for prostrations, fresh prayers, and fresh responses, which lasted at least a quarter of an hour. And now came the great event of the day—nay, of the year. The priests opened the cases so as to expose their contents to view; and then, with their backs to the congregation and their faces towards the Holy Place on Gerizim, held them up over their heads, with the sacred parchments full in view of the whole synagogue. Every one prostrated himself, and that not once, but repeatedly, and for a length of time. Then the devout pressed forward to kiss, to stroke fondly, to touch, or if none of these were possible, to gaze on the precious treasures. Several children were allowed to kiss. It was past five; and now commenced, if indeed they can ever be said to have ceased, a succession of prayers and catechisms between priest and congregation; he intoning, and they vociferating after him, with him, before him, apparently in the wildest confusion. His chant had a strong resemblance to the ordinary plain song in the Roman Church, and was tunable enough, with the exception of a sort of jerk or *hiccup* which occasionally occurred, and which threw an individual and quite a savage character into it. *Their* part I can compare to nothing but the psalms for the day as performed at St. George's-in-the East during the riots, when a majority *said* and a minority *sang* them; and even that wanted the force and energy which here lent such a dreadful life to the discord. These responses—which, I was afterwards told, were avowals of their belief in Jehovah and in Moses—were accompanied by constant sudden prostrations, the effect of which was most remarkable, and by frequently rubbing down the whole face and beard with the right hand, a gesture which I had not noticed till now. At intervals during this time, the kissing and stroking the rolls, as they lay in state on the sloping stand, was going to an extent which must seriously injure them, and would be fatal if it happened oftener. The one in the old case was the favourite. Had I not been present this day, I doubt if, even with Jacob's influence, I should have seen it; for it is brought out with great reluctance, and all kinds of subterfuges are resorted to, to avoid showing it to travellers. One little episode of this part of the proceedings struck me. There was a youth, whom I caught sight of, timidly hovering behind the bolder spirits, who pressed round the rolls, as if anxious yet afraid to come forward—

tinues till a little after sunset, when the anxious and tedious duties of *Kibburim** are finished.

We need only add here, that in addition to the postures they assume in their usual service, as explained elsewhere, they occasionally lean on a kind of crutches, for the sake of resting themselves. The Oriental Christians do the same.

On the fifteenth day of the same month, they begin the Feast of Secut (the Hebrew *Sukkoth*), or Tabernacles, as commanded in the law: "The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the Lord. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the Lord: it is a solemn assembly, and ye shall do no servile work therein" (Lev. xxiii. 34–36). And again: "Ye shall dwell in booths seven days, all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: that your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to

'Still pressing, longing to be right,
Yet fearing to be wrong.'

"Poor fellow! after all, he missed his opportunity, and only succeeded in summoning his courage when the roll was shut, and it was too late to do more than touch the silver case. I pitied him from my heart, and longed that such modest *Christian* diffidence in sacred things, might have a worthier object for its exercise. It was a pretty little incident, and was one of the few touches of human feeling, which softened the harshness of this most singular service." — "Vacation Tourists," 1861, p. 349.

* The pronunciation given by the Samaritans.

dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God" (Lev. xxiii. 42, 43).

On the eleventh day, the morrow of the day of atonement, they begin to erect the booths, which must be ready by the morning of the fourteenth day. They must be erected also in the open air, for which purpose their courts are selected. I did not learn in what manner they construct them, nor in what manner they use the four kinds of branches: "And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of the tree hadar, and branches of palm-trees, and a bough of the tree aboth, and willows of the brook: and ye shall rejoice before the Eternal your God seven days" (Lev. xxiii. 40).*

On each of these seven days service is held in the synagogue morning and evening; and in course of the day, they go up in procession to Mount Gerizim, "in honour of the Eternal." No servile work is done during these days, nor any business transacted. The eighth day is kept strictly as a day of rest—a peculiarly sacred day, when they go to synagogue, and the service-book, adapted for the feast, is repeated by the priest.

In the month of Shabat they hold the Feast of Purim. Among the Jews this feast is held in the month Adar, on the fourteenth day of the month, to commemorate the wonderful deliverance of her nation effected by Queen Esther, as recorded in the ninth chapter of her book—the word "Purim" signifying "portion" or "lots."

* Dr. Benisch's translation.

But the Samaritans hold it in the previous month, on the three last sabbaths in the month, to commemorate, not the deliverance of the Jews by Esther, but the mission of Moses to deliver the Israelites out of Egypt. They have a particular service for the day, which lasts for about six hours, comprising the history of the event as recorded in the law, with prayers, and blessings, and songs interspersed. The object of the feast is to bear a lively record and remembrance of Moses' gracious mission, and the circumstances connected therewith. There is no authority in the law, as the priest observed, for holding this feast.

In reply to my objections to the name of the feast, Amram would have it that the signification of "Purim" was not "lots" nor "portions," but "rejoicings."

CHAPTER VII.

MOUNT GERIZIM AND THE HOLY PLACES.

THE religious rites of Palestine, whether performed in honour of the true God or that of idols, were celebrated, from the earliest ages, on the tops of the highest mountains. Unlike the grotto mysteries of Greece and Rome, whose priests shrouded themselves in thick darkness, the old worshippers in Palestine bent their knees, and offered up their sacrifices "in the face of the sun and the eye of day." This fact was so universally known, and its influence so deeply felt, that the great lawgiver in Israel thought it his duty to forewarn the conquerors of its influence, and for their future guidance enacted, "Ye shall utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the high mountains, and upon the hills, and under every green tree: and ye shall overthrow their altars, and break their pillars, and burn their groves with fire; and ye shall hew down the graven images of their gods, and destroy the names of them out of that place. Ye shall not do so unto the Lord your God. But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all your tribes to

put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come" (Deut. xii. 2–5). And up to the period when Jerusalem was chosen, and a house of God had been erected there, the people sacrificed "in high places" (1 Kings iii. 2). And even then, when sacrifice had become established at the Temple and forbidden elsewhere, we find, after many ages, the high places were not forsaken: "Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places" (2 Kings xiv. 4). So deeply, indeed, was the high-place worship impressed upon the religious feeling of the people, that it proved a snare to them through all their subsequent history. On the other hand, the inferiority of the Temple mount in regard to elevation could hardly fail to detract, in the mind of the mass of the people, from the importance of the Temple worship. How humble it appeared when compared with many in Palestine itself, and how insignificant when compared with the heights of Bashan! Hence the Psalmist's triumph—in spite of its inferiority, God had chosen it for his residence, and his Temple palace gave it dignity:—

> "The mountain of God is the mountain, O Bashan!
> The mountain of heights, O mountain of Bashan!"

"Wherefore, ye mountains of heights, do ye regard with envy the mountain which God desireth to dwell in, yea, wherein Jehovah will dwell for ever?" (Ps. lxviii. 15, 16.)

It is these early and deep sympathies that have

rendered Mount Gerizim so sacred to the children of Ephraim ever since the first conquest. Long before the woman of Samaria said to our Saviour, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain," it had become to them the most holy place. In the same spirit have the Samaritans regarded it through all ages, and so even to this day. To them it is the great and only *kibla* of the world. Just as the Jew in all parts of the world turns his face in prayer towards the Temple mount in Jerusalem, so does the Samaritan to Gerizim, his temple mount. Nothing, perhaps, can give a better idea of the extravagant estimation in which the Samaritans hold the sacred hill than the various names by which they call it, and the notions upon which these names are founded. These are thirteen in number. I shall give them just as Amram gave them to me, with this difference only, that I have given them in the common letters, and not in the Samaritan, but have retained Amram's orthography.

Bitel (בית . אל), the house of God.—"And he called the name of that place Beth-el" (Gen. xxviii. 19).* Amram interpreted it also *strong-house*.

Bitelwem (בית . אלהים), house of Jehovah.—"But unto the place which Jehovah your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come" (Deut. xii. 5).

Ar † *Akkedem* (הר . הקדם), the old mountain.—"And

* According to Samaritan tradition, Bethel stood on Mount Gerizim.

† *Ar* is the Samaritan pronunciation of *Har*, mountain.

their dwelling was from Mesha, as thou goest unto Sephar a mount of the east" (Gen. x. 30). Here Amram rendered *Har Hakkedem*, not "a mountain of the east," but "the old mountain," meaning Gerizim. Of the geography of the passage he knew or cared but little.

Ar Garizim (הר . גריזים), commandments.—"And it shall come to pass, when the Lord thy God hath brought thee in unto the land whither thou goest to possess it, that thou shalt put the blessing upon mount Gerizim, and the curse upon mount Ebal" (Deut. xi. 29).

Here it will be seen that, according to the Samaritan interpretation, Gerizim signifies "commandments."

Ar Anala (הר . הנחלה), my mountain, *i. e.* God's mountain.—"Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O Lord, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established" (Exod. xv. 17).

Gabat Olam (גבעת . עולם), mountain of the world, *i. e.* the highest and principal mountain in Palestine; therefore, to them, the principal in the world.—"The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills" (Gen. xlix. 26); rendering *ngolam* "world," and not "everlasting."

Luza (לוז), Luz.—"But the name of that city was called Luz at the first" (Gen. xxviii. 19). We have

already seen that, according to the Samaritan tradition, Luz or Bethel stood on Mount Gerizim.

Elwem Yereh (אלהים . יראה), Jehovah will see.*—"And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh, the Lord will see" (Gen. xxii. 14, marg.).

Makdas (מקדש), sanctuary.—"The Sanctuary, O Lord, which thy hands have established" (Exod. xv. 17).

Ad Arem (אחד . ההרים), the one mountain, *i. e.* the principal or most important mountain.—"And offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of" (Gen. xxii. 2); rendering *achad heharim*, not "one of the mountains," but "the one mountain."

Amakom umeber (המקום . המבחר), the chosen place. —"But at the place which the Lord thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover" (Deut. xvi. 6).

Ar Ashekinah (הר . השכינה), mountain of the presence.—"For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance, which the Lord your God giveth you" (Deut. xii. 9). It is curious to observe how Amram here substitutes for *Menuchah* the Chaldee *Shechinah*, the very word used in the Jewish *Targumim* for the divine presence in the tabernacle.

Ar Amanuah (הר.המנוה), mountain of gift.—"For

* Here it will be observed that Amram refrained from writing the original word *Jehovah*, but substituted *Elohim* instead, according to the pronunciation they give to the most sacred name. But, as elsewhere observed, they frequently use the original word.

ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance which the Lord your God giveth you" (Deut. xii. 9).

Such is the list of names by which these people call their favoured mountain, of hallowed associations; and however wrongly applied any of them may be, they serve to show with what spirit of veneration the Samaritans still regard their sacred Gerizim. Seldom do they name or write the word without adding, "the house of God." It was in the same spirit the woman of Samaria expressed herself with such an air of pride to our Saviour: "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain" (John iv. 20).

In addition to the sacred mountain, Samaritanism, like the other religions of Palestine, has also its holy places. These are the tombs of the prophets, *i. e.* the prophets of the first period. They comprise those of Joseph, Eleazer, Ithamar, Phineas, Joshua, Caleb, together with the seventy elders, as well as Eldad and Medad. They are all, according to Samaritan tradition, buried in the neighbourhood of Shechem; and their reputed tombs are esteemed as holy spots. The most beloved, of course, is that of Joseph Ben Phorat, as they call him;* which they frequently visit, where they read portions of the law and repeat prayers. They also, on certain occasions, visit the other tombs, especially

* Thus is he designated in the benedictions of his father Jacob (Gen. xlix. 22), rendered, in the authorized version, "*fruitful bough.*"

those of Phineas and Eleazer, for the purpose of performing their devotions. According to Amram's statement, these spots are thus visited merely to do honour to the memory of their great and good dead; and for no other purpose whatsoever. I had no opportunity of witnessing any of these pilgrimages, so that I might judge for myself. Amram may be right. But I had visited, with few exceptions, all the sacred Jewish tombs, and had made myself acquainted with the worship performed there; and I have my misgivings that the Samaritan tomb service, on most occasions, is not much better.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIAL CONDITION.

WE have already seen that the natives of Nablus are the most fanatic and wicked of all the Mussulmans of Palestine; and the local government, instead of exercising an ameliorating influence over its people, has, for ages past, only made bad worse. The immoral state of things, both in high and low places, together with the constant conflicts between parties that have disturbed the town and neighbourhood for ages, have inured both the people and their officers to deeds of rapine and violence.

To understand the political state of the people we must bear in mind that Djebel Nablus—comprising the town and the surrounding towns and villages—has a local government of its own, subject to the Porte. The governor, till lately, has always been an Arab.* There are four Arab families† who, from time to time, for some generations past, have contested the governorship,

* The first foreigner—a Turk, I believe—was appointed by the Porte in 1828, but only remained about a year.

† These are the Hady, the Jerrar, the Rayan, and the Tokan families.

with varying success; and have thus kept up a spirit of rivalry, of war, and of bloodshed among the people. These families, with their partizans and dependants, are very powerful. Two of these—the Jerrar and the Hady—in addition to their numerical strength, live in villages strongly walled and fortified. They continually intrigue against each other; and the foulest means have been frequently resorted to for the purpose of deposing a rival. This was generally done by bribing the high officials and the pasha, accompanied with accusations, true or false, against the then governor. When this plan happened to fail, more unscrupulous means were frequently resorted to. In this manner, Djebel Nablus has been kept like a boiling pot for generations. For example, between the years 1805 and 1842, no fewer than thirteen changes of governors were made. Such a state of things must have been most detrimental to the welfare of the inhabitants. And, moreover, every change being accompanied with heavy bribes, the first concern of the new governor would be, of course, to reimburse himself, and hasten, by every possible means, the replenishment of his coffers.

No section of the population has suffered more severely than the Samaritans. The cause would sometimes be political. Members of that community have frequently been in office, and almost as frequently accused, rightly or wrongly, of abusing their trust; and then would follow a terrible retaliation, not only upon the alleged offenders, but also frequently upon the whole community. But, in addition to these outrages,

the Samaritans have frequently suffered persecution on account of their religion. The Mohammedans, ever ready to fall upon unbelievers, have wreaked their fanaticism upon the feeble and unprotected Samaritans times without number. Attempts have even been made from time to time to extirpate the whole community. One of these happened in 1841, when they were saved by a declaration of the Jewish Chief Rabbi in Jerusalem. I shall give the whole story in the words of one of their own people :—

"A little previous to this, a Samaritan widow had been decoyed by some influential Moslem, and embraced the faith of Mohammed. She had a son and daughter, who remained with us; but the Ulemas decreed that they must follow the religion of their mother: the governor Mohammed, however, would not consent to this compulsion, and strenuously opposed them. The Ulemas, enraged at an act which to them appeared in direct opposition to the dictates of their religion, induced Mahmoud Abdul Hady (the governor's uncle) to repair to Damascus, where, by means of bribery and misrepresentation, he obtained the governorship for himself, his nephew being displaced.

"Upon the triumphant arrival of Mahmoud in Nablus, the Ulemas assembled and told him that if he wanted their favour he must endeavour to purify and thoroughly cleanse the city from the Samaritan religion; but, first of all, must oblige the son and daughter of the Samaritan widow immediately to embrace the 'religion of resignation' (*Deen el Islam*). This he pro-

mised, and sought to make the children submit. The boy was about fourteen years old; and after a fortnight's imprisonment, with threats and frequent lashes, he embraced the Mohammedan religion; but the girl died from fear of the dreadful torture to which she was about to be subjected. The boy's name was Isaac, and he is now known throughout Djebel Náblus under the newly adopted Mohammedan name of Asaad. After the submission of this youth, the Ulemas assembled, and conspired to murder the whole Samaritan people, unless they would embrace the Moslem faith. There happened to be present a Samaritan named M'Barak, who, alarmed at what he heard, and being threatened, at once confessed faith in Mohammed. He was carried in triumph through the city on horseback, whilst his former co-religionists were being sought for. These, however, had obtained information of the scheme on foot, and some of them fled, whilst others concealed themselves. The plea upon which the Mohammedan Ulemas acted thus was, that the Samaritans had no religion at all, not even believing in any one of the five inspired books, which are:—1. The Torah, or Law of Moses; 2. The Angeel, or New Testament; 3. The Zaboor, or Psalms; 4. The Anbeeyah, or Prophets; and 5. The Koran of Mohammed. A sect which acknowledges the inspiration of any one of these five books, is *legally* tolerated by the Mohammedans. This being known to the Samaritans, they endeavoured to prove their belief in the Pentateuch; but the Mohammedans, not being acquainted with the holy tongue, disbelieved them.

They then applied to the Chief Rabbi of the Jews in Jerusalem (a recognized representative and head of the Jewish faith), who immediately gave them a written declaration, certifying 'That the Samaritan people is a branch of the children of Israel, who acknowledge the truth of the Torah.' This document, backed by pecuniary presents, appeased the fury of the fanatics." *

Some forty years previous, they were nearly crushed through the barbarity of Abdul Hady and Moosa Bek. After those outrages, they repeatedly sought the protection of France, and also of England. Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem was instructed by Lord Clarendon to use his influence to protect them. His lordship also instructed Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, then the British Ambassador at Constantinople, to use his good offices on their behalf with the Government of the Sublime Porte. But, notwithstanding the kind and liberal spirit of Mr. Finn, the then British Consul at Jerusalem, he was able to render but little assistance to them. In consequence of the quarrels and the shedding of blood that took place there in 1855, the rival families have been humbled, and a governor foreign to the country appointed by the Porte, which has, to some extent, improved the condition of the Samaritans.

In a manuscript copy of *Futuhi Medineti-el Behnesa*, in the possession of Dr. Lee, there is a note in the fly-leaf at the end, on the Samaritans, which I shall now introduce, as a fit addendum to the above account. It

* Jacob Esh Shelaby, in his "Notices of the Modern Samaritans."

gives us a graphic view of their social position at the time. It was written in the year 1772, by one Achmed Effendi, but does not state where. The laws which he lays down, in way of answers to questions, for the proper regulation of the Samaritans, are as follow:—

"1. They are to be distinguished (from the Mohammedans) by dress. Their turbans must be made of coarse stuff, and of a black colour. They must also not be allowed to wear any garment that becomes men of education or men of high rank. None of their apparel may be made of valuable stuffs, such as silk, fine cloth, or even fine cotton.

"2. They are to be distinguished in riding. They are not allowed upon any account to ride upon horses; only upon asses. They must not use saddles, but pack-saddles. But let it be noticed that they are not allowed to ride even upon asses, except urgent business call them out of the city. Whenever they pass by a mosque, they must alight, and walk in the same path as the beast. Old shoes are to be suspended over their shoulders, with bells attached.

"3. They are not allowed to sit near where the Mohammedan governor may be; and should any one be elevated above a Mohammedan, the governor must punish him.

"4. They are not allowed to build their houses high, nor too near a Moslem house.

"Thus, they are not to enjoy the privileges (of

Mohammedans) unless they profess that God is the only God, and Mohammed is his prophet."

I have only to add here, with regard to their avocations, that a few of them follow certain handicrafts, but the majority are traders in various wares, and are, as a community, comparatively poor, as well as oppressed.

CHAPTER IX.

LANGUAGE.

THE Samaritans, in a certain sense, are a trilingual people, having to use, in their social and religious duties, the Arabic, the Samaritan, and the Sacred (or Hebrew) languages.

Their spoken language is the Arabic—the common speech of the country. This, soon after the Mussulman conquest of Palestine, wholly supplanted their old vernacular. Very few at present of the males, and none of the females, understand any but the Arabic. Therefore, most of their books, although originally written in the sacred language, are translated into Arabic.

With regard to their own original language—the Samaritan—European scholars have widely differed in their estimation of it, almost on all points. The scantiness of its literature, and the generally superficial knowledge which is possessed of it by Europeans, would, to some extent, account for this. But our object in this chapter is not to drag our reader through a long

discussion on this subject, but merely to state a few points as briefly as possible.

We find from the sacred narrative that the Ephraimites had, from an early date, contracted a dialectic peculiarity,* which undoubtedly grew more and more in subsequent ages. After the captivity of the Ten Tribes, the nationalities sent by the King of Assyria to colonize the cities of Samaria (2 Kings xvii.) brought with them their own dialects. But after the return from captivity, the Hebrew language as well as religion eventually became dominant. Now, however, it was no longer spoken in its former purity, but with a large admixture of foreign elements. This fusion, having the Hebrew for its basis, formed the Samaritan language. Its framework is thoroughly Semitic; but the superstructure contains many anomalies, some of which are harsh and foreign, though by no means in sufficient number to destroy its general character. Its general construction is uncommonly simple, and not unfrequently it is very lucid and forcible. There is no foundation for the assertion made by Cellarius and others that it is more rude and uncouth than its neighbours.

It has been alleged that there is a deficiency in its orthography. Benjamin of Tudela asserted in his "Itinerary" that the Samaritans do not possess the three letters *He*, *Cheth*, and *Ayin*, and draws from the supposed fact the following conclusion:—"The *He*, of the name of our father Abraham, and they have no

* It was the pronouncing *Shin* as *Samech* (Judges xii. 6).

glory; the *Cheth* of the name of our father Isaac (Heb. *Itschak*), in consequence of which they are devoid of piety; and *Ayin* of the name of Jacob, for they want humility. Instead of these letters, they always put an *Aleph*, by which you may know that they are not of Jewish origin, for they know the law of Moses except these three letters."* Others have followed the rabbi; † but in this they are mistaken: the Samaritans have retained the alphabet, not only in its original fulness, but also in its original form, as we shall presently see. Nor is there any foundation for the assertion made by Hottinger and others, that their pronunciation is rough and harsh; on the contrary, it is softer than that of the Jews and Arabs. As, for example, the *Cheth* they call *It*, and treat it as a semi-vowel; consequently, while the Jews would say *Rachel*, the Samaritans would say *Râel*. Where two or more consonants come together, they uniformly add the vowels in reading. As, for example, the word for *king*, written with *Mem*, *Lamed*, *Caph*, they pronounce *malek*. The vowel letters —*Aleph*, *He*, *Vau*, *Yod*—they treat as quiescents. For example, the *Yod* they sometimes sound as short *a*, as in *kadish*—holy; and sometimes as short *i*, as in *yummim*—days. More on the vowels anon.

The Samaritan language, after the Mohammedan

* Rapaport is of opinion that the above paragraph was not originally in the "Itinerary," but is an interpolation of later date by some cabalistic copyist. — *Vid.* Asher's ed. vol. ii. p. 87.

† Isaac Halo added *Aleph* to the list, and thus made them to be four ("Itinerary," A.D. 1334).

conquest of Palestine, gradually dwindled into a dead language. The only literature now remaining in it is a translation of the Pentateuch, a brief description of which is given in our chapter on the Pentateuch.

It is a well-known fact that the Samaritan characters are essentially different from those that have been in use among the Jews now for many ages, and known as Hebrew. The most generally adopted opinion (following the Talmud) is, that the Jews, during their captivity in Babylon, disused their original characters, and adopted the Chaldee instead; consequently, that the present Hebrew alphabet is of Chaldee origin; but that the original characters in use among the Hebrews before the captivity are those still retained by the Samaritans. Others are of opinion that the present Hebrew characters are not of Chaldee origin, but only the result of a gradual change and modification of their original, or Samaritan. And here let it be observed that the printed or monumental Samaritan characters differ from the written as much as the Hebrew differ from the monumental. But, before we make any further remarks, let us arrange the three alphabets in juxtaposition.

Name.	Samaritan MS.	Monumental.	Hebrew.
Alâph			א
Bît			ב
Gemân			ג
Delât			ד
I			ה
Ba			ו
Zên			ז
It			ח
Tît			ט
Yut			י
Kiâph			כ
Lebât			ל
Mîn			מ
Nun			נ
Sinciât			ס
In			ע
Phi			פ
Sadi			צ
Kupt			ק
Rîsh			ר
Shân			ש
Taff			ת

In the first column I have given the names of the letters as pronounced by the Samaritans as near as can be expressed in English; and if the reader will bear in mind that the circumflex accent is used merely to denote length of sound, and that the *a* has the sound of *a* in *fat*, the *i* as in *pin*, the *e* as in *met*, and the *u* as in *full*, he will be able to enunciate them as correctly as can be desired.

In the second column is the original Samaritan alphabet. It is a facsimile of one given me expressly by the priest. These are the only characters used by them in their sacred and other writings; and there is no doubt in my own mind that they are the identical ones in which the *Torah*, or law, was originally written by Moses.

The third column comprises the alphabet commonly known in Europe as the Samaritan, and in which are printed the Samaritan Pentateuch and its version in the European polyglot Bibles.

The fourth column contains the common Hebrew alphabet.

Now, it is not my intention to discuss the origin and history of these alphabets; such a discussion would embrace a wide range of literature, and the attempt would be unfitted to these pages. But I cannot pass over the subject without making a few remarks.

And, firstly, with regard to the Hebrew characters. The old and common notion, that they are of Chaldee origin, has now become quite untenable. The valuable and interesting discoveries lately made in

Assyria and Babylon remove all doubt upon this head. We know now to a certainty that the Chaldeans had characters of their own, essentially different from the present Hebrew; and in no single instance, among the vast number of inscriptions found, does the least similarity between them exist. In the earliest specimens of Chaldean writing and the later Assyrian — between which considerable modification was effected — the great characteristic element is the wedge form, with which the present Hebrew has no affinity. We are compelled, therefore, to look elsewhere for its source.

With regard to the written Samaritan, it would be vain to speculate upon its origin. Much has been said in modern times to show that, together with all the Syro-Arabian characters, it is derived from the Phœnician; and that a resemblance exists between them, in many instances, is very evident.* But the oldest known Phœnician monuments are comparatively of modern date, as they are all, with one or two exceptions, posterior to the time of Alexander; and if it could be satisfactorily shown that they fairly represent what the Phœnician alphabet really was in the earliest ages, the resemblance between them and the Samaritan alphabet would not establish the fact that the Samaritan is

* The reader may examine the subject for himself by consulting *Kopp's Bilder und Schriften der Vorzeit*, and Gesenius' *Scripturæ Linguæque Phœniciæ Monumenta*, where complete tabular views of alphabets are given, and the general subject of palæography ably discussed, but including, as I conceive erroneously, the Samaritan among those derived from the Phœnician.

derived from the Phœnician, but rather the reverse.* Some resemblances between the Samaritan and the hieretic and demotic characters of Egypt are traceable; but these are too few and too faint to establish a relation between them, and moreover, the Egyptian writings were not phonetic. The style, however, far more resembles the wedge form of Chaldea than that of Phœnicia or Egypt, but differs from it in being a perfectly phonetic alphabet. The linguistic knowledge already obtained from the Assyrian monuments discovers important grammatical analogies between both languages; which, by a further examination, will undoubtedly be rendered more complete.† At present, however, whether we view the question with regard to Phœnicia and Egypt on the one hand, or to Assyria on the other, the only fair and legitimate conclusion seems to be that the Samaritan alphabet was given by Moses—either modified from characters previously existing, but now lost to the world, or independently formed by him under divine influence.‡

* It seems to me that a fair comparison can only lead to the conclusion that the Phœnician is merely a modification of the Samaritan, though earlier than the common or monumental Samaritan.

† See Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies," vol. i. Second Monarchy, chap. v.

‡ In the record of that event we read, "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God" (Exod. xxxi. 18). The expression, "*By the finger of God*," certainly implies that the thing done was a proof of divinity; and here I cannot help thinking that it refers to the expression of words in phonetic characters. Moses, who was learned in all the wisdom of Egypt, well knew the modes of writing, not only of that country but other countries also; and yet the manner in which the Commandments were written was not only new, but also so superior to all previous modes as to be thought worthy of divine origin.

With regard to the common or monumental Samaritan, given in our second column, it is first met with on the Asmonean coins, and used in modern times to print Samaritan literature. It is from this alphabet that modern critics have drawn their conclusions regarding the antiquity of the Samaritan characters. To call it Samaritan, however, is rather gratuitous, as the Samaritans themselves, so far as I know, have never used it, either in manuscripts or on monuments. All the remains of their writings are in one and the same character, namely, that which stands in our first column. The most ancient of their writings yet discovered (the celebrated scroll excepted) is a tablet now inserted in the wall of a minaret. It belonged to a synagogue, taken from them by the Mohammedans some four centuries ago; but the synagogue itself, according to Samaritan tradition, dated before the Christian era. The inscriptions consist of sentences taken from the law, written in the Samaritan character. Others of more modern date have been discovered, but all bearing the same characters. But this monumental alphabet seems to be of Jewish origin, and to have been used principally, if not exclusively, by the Jews. Alphabets, as well as the living languages they represent, are continually modified and altered: so has the one under notice been; but not to an extent sufficient to disguise its origin. But it seems to me that the true Samaritan is an exception. Being the one in which the great lawgiver wrote the sacred document, so tenaciously preserved by the Samaritans in all its original characteristics, there seems to me to be hardly a doubt upon the subject.

It appears evident, too, that the alphabets have but one and the same source—that the two latter are derived from the former. Let the reader examine them carefully, and mark the outline of each letter, and we feel convinced that he cannot arrive at any other conclusion than this—that the first column is the original, from which the second, as a monumental alphabet, is a modification; and that the third, the common Hebrew, is, again, a modification of the second. Our arrangement of them, therefore, as above, in juxtaposition, is a correct exhibition of their chronological order. And this is further proved by documentary evidence so far as is yet known. But further than this we cannot follow the subject at present.

How far the Samaritans retained the Hebrew language in its purer forms we have no means of ascertaining. There is every reason, however, to suppose that their officials would have done so. Just as the modern Jews are taught it from their infancy—and as it is still, to a certain extent, a vernacular among their rabbins—so would the Samaritan Priests and Levites, at least, acquire it in ancient times. Even now their officials are familiar with it, and are capable of speaking and writing it with ease, although not with grammatical accuracy. The Hebrew, however, has always been their sacred language. In this the Holy Law, and all their other valued writings, are written. It is emphatically the language of their literature as well as of their religious service; but, as already observed, the Samaritan people generally are ignorant of its meaning.

Some Oriental scholars have concluded that the Samaritan pronunciation must be harsh, from the fact that no vowels nor vowel points are used. This argument, however, has no force, inasmuch as all the Semitic languages are written in the same manner. Whether we hold the whole alphabet, with the punctist, to consist of consonants only, the vowels to be added in reading, or, with the anti-punctist, that, in ancient times, the *aleph*, *he*, *vau*, and *yod* were real vowels, it matters not at present; one thing is undeniable, namely, that the modern Samaritans read and speak the language with a much fuller vowel sound than their neighbours do the sister language. We have already remarked how they soften down some of the harsher elements of the language; and to this we may attribute their liberal use of vowels. Whether their vowel system has any grammatical basis, or is merely traditional, it is not for us now to discuss. The vowel sounds which they use are the following:—

a, as in fat
e, ,, met
i, ,, pin
o, ,, no
u, ,, full
y, ,, myrrh.

To each of these a long and a short sound is given, excepting *y*, which is always short. This system exactly corresponds with the Hebrew, as established by the Jewish grammarians of the Middle Ages, with the exception of *y*, which, nevertheless, would answer to

their *sheva*. The probability is that these vowel sounds preserve, upon the whole, the pronunciation given to the Hebrew by the ancient Jews and Samaritans of Palestine.*

* It is curious to observe that the ancient Assyrians, so far as can be yet learnt from the inscriptions, used similar vowel sounds. "Their A sounded as *a* in vast; E, as *a* in face; I, as *e* in me; O, as *o* in host; U, as *u* in rude."—Rawlinson's "Five Great Monarchies," vol. i. p. 338, note.

CHAPTER X.

THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.*

SEVERAL of the Christian fathers have mentioned a Samaritan Pentateuch as existing apart from that of the Jews. The last who refers to it, so far as I am aware, is Jerome. After him it was lost sight of; and when it had lain concealed for upwards of a thousand years, its very existence began to be doubted. At length Pietro Della Valle, an eminent Italian traveller, procured a complete copy during his travels in the East, in the year 1616. M. de Sancy, who was then the French ambassador at Constantinople, obtained this copy and sent it to the library of the Oratoire at Paris, in 1623. It was first examined and described by Morin, and subsequently printed in the Paris Polyglott Bible. Jerome Alexander writes in 1638, that a copy of the Samaritan Pentateuch had existed in the Vatican for some time. This copy was procured by Cardinal Scipio, the library keeper, for three hundred

* I have confined myself in this chapter to a summary of the question, as I intend entering more into detail, in an Introduction to my edition of the Samaritan Pentateuch, now preparing for the press.

crowns, but it remained without any particular attention being paid to it. Not long after this, Archbishop Ussher procured six copies from the East; and in 1657, Bishop Walton printed the text in his famous Polyglott Bible. Several more copies were procured from the East, and Dr. Kennicott had no fewer than sixteen for the edition of his Hebrew Bible in 1776–80.*

With regard to the origin of this Pentateuch, learned men have entertained various opinions. The most unfounded of all was the one advocated by Ussher. He would have it that it was the production of one Dositheus, a Samaritan sectarian, who, it is alleged, pretended to be the Messiah, and founded a sect of his own among his people. It was supposed that Dositheus made use of the Hebrew text and the version of the LXX.; and comparing these, sometimes adding, other times expunging, and again altering as he deemed fit, produced a Pentateuch of his own.† Nothing, however, could be more unfounded than such a hypothesis. This heresiarch could have had no object whatever in compiling a new Pentateuch, unless for the sake of tampering with those passages which are considered as referring to the Messiah. None of these, however, have been corrupted; as all

* Most of the above copies are only portions or fragments of the Pentateuch: there are only two or three complete copies in Europe.

† The learned and judicious Du Pin has satisfactorily confuted this, amongst other objections: and therefore I refer the reader to that excellent author. See his Canon. Script., book i. ch. 5. s. 2. *Kennicott.*

the passages of this class agree in the Samaritan and Hebrew texts. And, moreover, it is well known that the Alexandrian Samaritans were thoroughly opposed to Dositheus, and it is not likely that they would have received a Pentateuch compiled by him.

Another hypothesis, held in our own country by Prideaux, and on the Continent by Hottinger and others, is that Manasseh took with him from Jerusalem one of Ezra's corrected copies, and transcribed it into the old characters to which they were accustomed. This hypothesis rests upon the assumption that the variations in the Samaritan from the Hebrew are such as were occasioned in the transcription, by mistaking letters similar in Hebrew, but unlike in the Samaritan. This, however, is a mistake, and there is no foundation for such a supposition.

Le Clerc, and others after him, advocated an older origin for the copy. He held that it was made by the priest who was sent by the King of Assyria to instruct the new inhabitants in the religion of the country, as narrated in 2 Kings xvii. But I need not point out that such a hypothesis is not only unsupported by historical testimony, but is also contrary to the tenor of the whole narrative. The business of the priest was not to compile a code of instruction, but simply to instruct the people out of the code as it then existed.

It is evident that there is but one rational and consistent account of its origin. Copies of the Pentateuch must have been multiplied among Israel, as well as among Judah, and preserved by the one as carefully as

by the other. Nor is it probable that the people, when carried captive into Assyria, took with them all the copies of the law; that not one remained among the remnant left behind: and had such been the case, the priest, himself, as a matter of course, would have possessed a copy.

This copy became the religious textbook of the Samaritans, and has ever since remained among them; separate on the one hand from the Jews,* and on the other hand from the Gentiles. Such was the theory first and ably advanced by Morin, and subsequently adopted by Houbigant, Cappellus, Michaelis, Kennicott, Stuart, and a host of others. In fact, sound criticism is bound up in it. The Samaritan copy, therefore, as well as the Jewish, flowed from the autograph of Moses, and the two are only different recensions of the same original copy.

* There is one passage in Josephus, to which I cannot help referring here, as evident proof of this (Ant., xiii. 3. 4). He tells us that a dispute arose between the Jews of Alexandria and the Samaritans, concerning the temples on Mount Gerizim and in Jerusalem. The parties agreed to discuss the rival claims of both places, in the presence of the king, Ptolemy Soter; and to prove their case from the law of Moses. The Samaritan disputants, conscious of the fact that Moses, according to the reading in their copy of the law, had pointed out Gerizim as the place of worship (Deut. xxvii. 4), allowed their opponents to speak first. The Jews, on the other hand, we are told, were in great concern about their advocates, knowing well that there is nothing in the law sanctioning a temple at Jerusalem. The only argument that could be drawn from Moses was a different reading of the above passage to annul the Samaritan claim, if such a different reading did then exist, as most likely it did. We have nothing now to do with the unfair disputation, nor the unjust decision of the king; but merely to point out the fact that the Samaritans had then a copy of the law, distinct from that of the Jews.

Such, briefly, is the non-Samaritan account of the copy. They, themselves, however, give a very different version, as we shall presently see.

During my stay amongst them in 1860, a copy of their Pentateuch was kindly lent me by the priest—the first, I believe, that was ever given out of their community with official sanction, with the exception of one sent, to their supposed brethren, by the hands of Huntington. It is written on Oriental paper, in a book form, and, for the sake of convenience, divided into two volumes; the first containing Genesis and Exodus, and the second containing Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. In a foot-note at the end of the first volume, I find that the writer was a servant of Tobiah Ben Itschak, a priest of the Most High, at Shechem. He does not mention the date; but I was told by Amram that it was written in the fourteenth century, and had been preserved in the priest's family ever since.

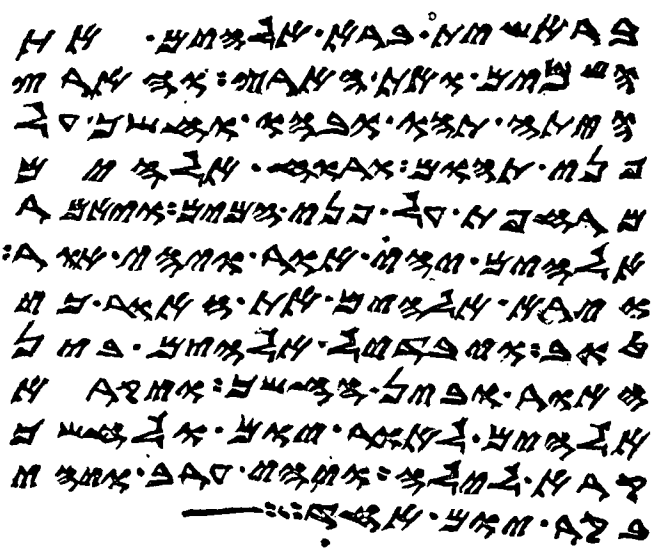
I shall now briefly describe it; and in doing so, I shall, in the first place, point out its peculiar characteristics as a writing.

1. The first is *the characters* in which it is written. These are essentially different from those called Hebrew, as we have already seen. They are the only letters used by the Samaritans themselves in their sacred writings. Nor are they acquainted with the monumental type any further than as learnt from Walton's Polyglott, a copy of which, on the Pentateuch, they possess. I took with me specimens of the

alphabet adopted by Scaliger, and the letters which Castel affirms are especially used in MS.; but they were unknown to the priest.

The subjoined specimen is a facsimile of the copy under notice, comprising Gen. i. 1–5.

Specimen.



2. Again, it is written *without vowel points.* I have already mentioned that all the Semitic languages, like the present Arabic, were written without any marks to exhibit the vowel sounds of the language. Whether this system was of the same nature as the modern systems of shorthand writing, where the consonants only are written, and the vowels to be supplemented, or whether it contained the essential

vowels, is not for me now to discuss. The singular system of the Masorites was elaborated professedly to retain the traditional pronunciation of the Hebrew language; but their vowel signs were never introduced into the synagogue roll. In this the Samaritan and Jewish rolls agree.

The Samaritans, therefore, like the Jews, in reading the law, have retained two things not expressed in the writing—the vowel sounds, and the intonation, as already explained.

The manuscript, however, is not void of all kind of marks; there are a few diacritical signs, if I may so call them. The most common is a dot which is placed after every word, and which is never omitted, except at the end of a line. Another is a small stroke placed over letters, and which has more than one signification. Sometimes it implies that an ambiguous word is not to be taken in its most common acceptation; as, for example, אל means *to* or *at*, but אֵל means *God*. At other times the stroke is a sign of apocope, אתֹ for אתה. Sometimes two points are placed thus : after a word, and answer pretty much to our colon. The ends of sections are distinguished by various signs. The most common is one consisting of two double dots, having a line between, thus :∠: There is apparently no rule in the choice of these signs, but they depend upon the fancy of the writer, as we find them differing in different manuscripts. There are other marks, but we need not notice them here.

3. Another characteristic, peculiar to the Samaritan

manuscript, I believe, is the *manner of commencement.* I hardly need mention that the Samaritan, like all the Semitic languages, reads from right to left; and, consequently, that a book begins with them, where in Western languages it would end. But the peculiarity always observed by the Samaritans, is to commence the manuscripts on the inside page, and by no means on the outside. To this rule they adhere most scrupulously, and it would be observed as rigidly in printed copies, if it were in their power to have them printed. When I expressed my intention to have the present copy printed, the priest called my attention to this rule over and over again, as a most important one. The idea is to imitate the sacred roll, which is written only on the inside; and, consequently, none of the text is exposed but that open for the purpose of being read.

4. The last characteristic in the writing, is the *detached state of the words.* I have already stated that every word is separately marked by a point—a rule which is never neglected. Thus the Samaritans separate each word, not only by a space, but also by a point, as did the ancient Greeks and Romans. On the other hand, no word, whether short or long, is ever divided. When it happens that the space at the end of a line is too small to admit of the word being inserted, they never write a part of the word and carry the other part to the following line, but carry the last letter of the previous word to the end of the line. In this manner no blank is left at the end of any line, but

near the end, if necessary, that the idea of completeness may be retained.

I shall now mention the divisions. The copy is divided into two volumes; the first comprising Genesis and Exodus, and the second comprising the three remaining books. This division is, of course, only an accidental one, for the convenience of using the manuscript. Its essential divisions are as follow:—

Firstly, it is divided into five separate books. In this, however, it differs from the original manuscript, and all the other Samaritan scrolls, as well as the Jewish, which are written in one continuous document. This division into five books seems to have originated with the Alexandrian critics, who applied, for the first time, the term Pentateuch to the sacred document. And this division has been followed by Jews and Samaritans in their private copies, for the sake of convenience of reference, but never in their public scrolls. In the Jewish Bible the several books take their names from the first word or words in each book, as *Bereshith* in Genesis; but in the Samaritan copy, they are all called First Book, Second Book, and so on. But it is of importance that we should bear in mind that the original and true idea of the writing is, that it is one book only, one document; hence its name, הַתּוֹרָה, the Law. Nor has it any existence in the Samaritan mind as five separate books, but only as one divine law.

Secondly, each book has been divided into sections (*Ketsin*); and the number of sections stated at the

end of each book. The first contains 250; the second 200; the third 134; the fourth 218; the fifth 160; or 962 in all. Here it will be borne in mind that the Jewish division of the law into fifty-four *Sedroth*, and each *Sederah* again into seven *Parshioth*, differs essentially from the Samaritan. The Samaritan *Ketsin* and the Jewish *Parshioth* coincide in a great number of places, but differ in others—they were evidently made independent of Jewish sections as well as of Alexandrian critics. Some of them end and begin in the middle of our verses. For example, in Gen. viii. 21, we have the first clause, "And the Lord smelled a sweet savour," punctuated in the Hebrew with a *segol;* and in the Septuagint, as well as modern versions generally, with a semicolon; but in the Samaritan this clause ends a section, and the following section commences with the second clause, "And the Lord said in his heart," &c. All these divisions into sections, however, as well as into books, both in the Samaritan and Hebrew copies, are post-biblical—there is no historical foundation for believing that they existed till after the Septuagint translation. I may add, that the sections in this Samaritan copy are distinguished, not only by space, but also by peculiar signs, generally varying; I have not been able as yet to make out whether these figures have any signification, or are merely rude ornaments.

Thirdly, there is one other division, not an arbitrary and post-biblical one, but one which is co-existent with, and an essential part of, the law itself—

the division into prose and poetry. I shall not dwell at present upon this point, although a most important one, inasmuch as it belongs both to the Jewish and to the Samaritan Pentateuch.

Let us now look for a moment at its documentary character. I need not mention that it has been differently estimated by different critics; but with the work before us, and all the historical facts connected therewith, we need not be led astray by any vague and reckless speculations. A family of manuscripts which can be traced back seven centuries before the Christian era, and manuscripts that have been written with no common accuracy and care, speak for themselves regarding their value in Biblical criticism. This leads me to mention the variations that exist between the Samaritan and Jewish copies. Apart from a few verbal discrepancies, and the great number of variations in the mere letters, the principal differences are contained in the history of the plagues of Egypt. The utterances of the Almighty against Pharaoh are uniformly recorded twice in the Samaritan text; firstly, when delivered by the Almighty to Moses, and again when repeated by Moses in the presence of Pharaoh. But in the Hebrew text they are only given *once;* generally, at the time when delivered by the Eternal. Now one of two things is obvious, either the Samaritans have wilfully inserted these repetitions into the text, or else the Jewish scribes have omitted them as unnecessary. I shall not enter into this subject at present, but merely say that to me it appears more evident that

the latter is the fact. A careful reading will discover, that in the present Hebrew text there are abrupt transitions from one subject to another, leaving chasms in the narrative, and thus making plain that something has been left out of the original history. But not so in the Samaritan text—here we find the narrative full and connected.

Among the vast number of smaller additions, there are some most interesting and important, which bring to light the consistency and beauty of the sacred text, not otherwise discoverable.

I cannot dismiss this subject without adverting to Gesenius, who, as is well known, in 1815, published an essay on the Samaritan Pentateuch; and a more unfounded and reckless performance has seldom issued from the press. This celebrated lexicographer has arranged all the readings which differ from the Hebrew text into eight different classes. I shall not follow him in detail, but confine myself to a single example. Let us take one from the seventh class—a most important one—where the critic asserts that the ancient pure Hebraism of the Pentateuch has been conformed to their own idiom by the Samaritan scribes. As a proof of this, among many similar ones, he brings forward the feminine pronoun *thoù*, in Genesis xii. 11; xxiv. 23; xxxix. 9. Here he finds the Hebrew pronoun in the short form אָתְּ, but the Samaritan in the long form אָתִי; he therefore jumps at the conclusion that the Samaritan scribes have altered the word to conform it to their own idiom. But what Hebrew scholar does

not know that the longer form is the more ancient of the two? And no one knew this better than Gesenius himself. Indeed, in his *lexicon*, where he had no object in view but grammatical truth, he gives us this explanation. These are his words: "אַתִּי. Although this form is rare in the Old Testament" (and then he quotes several passages), "yet there can be no doubt that it is genuine, and it is even *primary*, and a *more ancient form*, which afterwards the more negligent pronunciation of the common people shortened into אַתְּ." * Such is the explanation of Gesenius in his Hebrew *lexicon;* yet, when criticising the Samaritan Pentateuch, for the sake of damaging its character, he will have us to believe that this form of the pronoun is not the ancient and pure Hebrew, but a modification made by the Samaritan scribes to conform it to their own idiom. I might thus follow Gesenius through all his sections, and show how utterly groundless are his charges against the Samaritan scribes, and how very unfairly and dishonestly he treats their sacred volume: but this specimen shall suffice.

And yet biblical scholars have received such prejudiced productions for real criticism, and have very generally abided by its decisions. It only shows how biblical scholars, as do scholars in other departments

* It is very singular to observe that most of the variations in the Samaritan text, charged by Gesenius to the wilful corruption of the scribes, are simply the retention of the *Ahevi* letters (אהוי), which are left out of the Hebrew text after the adoption of the Masoretic system of punctuation, and even when the Keri readings agree with the Samaritan!

of learning, follow certain leaders without examining for themselves.

We should bear in mind, that in more than two thousand instances where the Samaritan differs from the Hebrew, the Septuagint agrees with the former; a fact that speaks for itself with regard to the documentary and critical value of the Samaritan text.

I shall conclude these remarks in the words of one, than whom few biblical critics could be thought better qualified to pronounce upon the subject. "It is by no means here intended to recommend the adoption of the Samaritan, in the place of the Hebrew Pentateuch; or so to establish the pretensions of the former, as to exclude the latter. *One* ancient copy has been received from the Jews, and we are truly thankful for it. *Another* ancient copy is offered by the Samaritans; let us thankfully accept that likewise. Both have been often transcribed; both therefore may contain errors. They differ in many instances; therefore the errors must be many. Let the two parties be heard without prejudice; let their evidences be weighed with impartiality; and let the genuine words of Moses be ascertained by their joint assistance. Let the variations of all the MSS. on each side be carefully collected, and then critically examined by the context and the ancient versions. If the Samaritan copy shall be found in some places to correct the Hebrew, yet will the Hebrew copy in other places correct the Samaritan. *Each copy*, therefore, is invaluable. *Each copy*, therefore, demands our pious veneration and attentive study.

And I am firmly persuaded that the Pentateuch will never be understood perfectly, till we admit the authority of BOTH." *

We have seen above, what, briefly, is the non-Samaritan account of this Pentateuch. They themselves, however, assert that not only has their Pentateuch proceeded from the original work of Moses; but also that they have now in their possession a copy written by Abishua, the great-grandson of Aaron. The tradition is, that Abishua wrote it at the door of the tabernacle, in the thirteenth year of the establishment of the children of Israel in the Holy Land. This they keep most sacredly. It is never exhibited, even to their own people, but once a year, on the day of atonement. I, like most travellers who visit Nablus, felt an intense desire to see this old copy, and if possible, to examine it, and as the time for my leaving the place drew nigh, this desire grew almost into a fever. Amram had now left for Jerusalem to procure a new cover for this roll. We had spoken of having it done in England, and I had expected that he would have entrusted me with the old one for that purpose; but upon further consideration he thought it safest, I suppose, to have it done under his own inspection: and for this purpose he had gone a few days before to Jerusalem. Yacub, his nephew, however, was still with me, and I felt as much confidence in him as in his uncle. Two days before I had to leave I was delighted with the promise of seeing the renowned roll. I was

* Kennicott, State of the Hebrew Text, Dis. II. p. 164.

to meet him early at the synagogue, when the sacred treasure would be exposed to my inspection. I need not say that I was punctual to the appointment. Yacub, after some few ceremonies, entered the adjoining room, and brought out a copy of the law, carefully wrapped up in a silk covering: but it was in a book-form. I made no remark till I had fully examined it. It was written on parchment, in large and beautiful letters, and was in excellent preservation. The columns measured seven inches by six, with a margin of two and a half inches at the top and front, and three inches at the bottom. It was altogether a most handsome volume. I forget the scribe's name and the date; but it was written, as Yacub informed me, on Mount Gerizim. Another similar copy was taken out, also carefully wrapped in a silk covering. When we had turned over the leaves of these interesting volumes to our satisfaction, I told Yacub I was much pleased with the sight, but that my great wish was to see the *old copy*. He was not a little annoyed by my remark. I knew that some eminent travellers had been imposed upon in the same manner; but I also knew that the ancient copy, being a synagogue copy, must have been a roll. I had seen their other roll-copies in 1855, as well as during the present visit, and had been told by a Samaritan friend, that the genuine copy would not be shown me. After some further conversation, Yacub confessed the whole matter, but added with no little emphasis that I should see it. He was not that morning in a fit state to handle it, but on the following

morning he would prepare himself by ablution: and I was again to meet him at the same hour. The morrow came, and I was punctual to time. We entered the synagogue, Yohannah with us, and locked the door. The celebrated scroll was then taken out of a chest in the *musbah*, and brought to the middle of the synagogue.

Having removed its red satin cover, which was ornamented with Samaritan inscriptions embroidered in golden letters, I found it was kept in a cylindrical silver case, which opened on two sets of hinges, made so as to expose a whole column of reading. This case was ornamented with relievo work, descriptive of the sacred contents of the tabernacle.*

Just as we had uncovered it, and begun to feast our eyes upon the column which is exposed to view on their days of atonement, a violent shake was given to the door, and a voice announced that a party of travellers wanted to come in. Yacub, in great haste, removed the sacred roll beyond the curtain into the *musbah*, and then opened the door. The dragoman—an impudent and haughty Mussulman—entered, with seven or eight travellers following, two ladies included. He began

* Mr. Grove made rubbings of parts of it, which have unfortunately been lost. He says, "It is a beautiful and curious piece of work; a cylinder of about two feet six inches long, and ten or twelve inches diameter, opening down the middle. One of the halves is engraved with a ground plan of the Tabernacle, showing every post, tenon, veil, piece of furniture, vessel, &c., with a legend attached to each—all in raised work. The other half is covered with ornament only, also raised. It is silver, and I think—but the light was very imperfect—parcel gilt."—"Vacation Tourists," 1861.

to throw aside the floor-matting, and demanded a sight of the ancient Pentateuch. Yacub looked rather vexed and cowed. I stepped forward, and told him that the place was a place of worship, and that he must behave himself, or go out at once. Such a repulse he hardly expected; but feeling that it was said in earnest, he replaced the matting, and conducted himself decently. Yacub brought out the common roll, and exposed it. From the few questions and answers made amongst themselves, I concluded that to see the roll was more a matter of curiosity than any deep interest in biblical literature. One of the gentlemen came up to me and asked did I think that that was the old copy. I told him that it certainly was the one they generally exhibited to travellers as such. One of the ladies asked, with great emphasis, "Is this the celebrated old book?" "Oh, yes, ma'am," was the dragoman's reply: and all then withdrew, apparently satisfied. Yacub followed after them for *backsheesh*, which he had a right to expect. He was but ill requited; and I felt vexed he did not make a demand for a small sum before he allowed them to enter the synagogue. The travellers, most probably, as others unwisely do, entrusted the matter to their dragoman, who put off poor Yacub with a mere trifle, and kept to himself the lion's share.

When Yacub had returned, we recommenced handling the old scroll. But before we had looked over the unrolled column, another shake was given to the door. A second party of travellers wanted to enter. Yacub had to hurry the scroll again into the *musbah*, and

the door was opened. This party was from New York —a middle-aged gentleman, and two young men. They entered the little synagogue with much sobriety and decorum, a perfect contrast to the former company. Their wish also was to see the old copy, if possible; if not, any copy would do; their great desire was to see a copy of the Samaritan law, and to hear a passage read. I told the gentleman that in that case he would not be disappointed. Yacub brought the roll which he had exhibited to the former party, and read a few passages, to the great satisfaction of our visitors.

The synagogue being left once more to ourselves, we began again to look over the old scroll. The exposed column was much effaced by being kissed by successive generations. I requested Yacub to allow me to unroll it, which he granted; and, after a brief examination, we made a hasty facsimile of the first passage in Genesis, which is hardly worth reproducing. Whilst the venerable scroll lay open before us, I made a few notes, the substance of which is as follows:—

The roll itself is of what we should call parchment, but of a material much older than that, written in columns thirteen inches deep, and seven and a half inches wide. The writing is in a fair hand; but not nearly so large or beautiful as the book-copies which I had previously examined. The writing being rather small, each column contains from seventy to seventy-two lines, and the whole roll contains a hundred and ten columns. The name of the scribe is written in a kind of acrostic, and forms part of the text, running through three columns,

and is found in the Book of Deuteronomy.* Whether it be the real work of the great-grandson of Aaron, as indicated in the writing, I leave the reader to judge; the roll, at all events, has the appearance of a very high antiquity; and is wonderfully well preserved considering its venerable age. It is worn out and torn in many places and patched with re-written parchment; in many other places, where not torn, the writing is unreadable. But it seemed to me that about two-thirds of the original is still readable. The skins of which the roll is composed are of equal size, and measure each twenty-five inches long and fifteen inches wide.

We had hardly finished our hasty examination before we were again disturbed by a violent shake of the door. Some of the Samaritans had suspected what was going on, and Phineas, Yacub's cousin, was sent to put a stop to our proceedings; and Yacub felt it to be prudent to replace the sacred scroll as quickly as possible.

Here I may as well mention the versions made from this text.

1. The first and most important is that in the Samaritan language. To the common people the language of the original was a dead language; therefore, just as the Jews of Palestine made a version of the Old Testament in Chaldee for the use of their people, who were unable to understand the original, so did the Samaritans make

* This statement I give upon the authority of Yacub, as we had not sufficient time to examine that fact. Mr. Levisohn and Mr. Kraus, a few months after, on examining it, found, they say, that it actually exists.

a version of the Pentateuch in their own language for the benefit of their people. When and by whom this version was made is unknown. It was evidently done from the Samaritan codex, which, upon the whole, it closely follows, rendering word for word. Critics have, of course, variously speculated upon its merits, some holding that its translator followed the Targum of Onkelos, whilst others deny it; but it may, perhaps, be fairly said that not sufficient attention has as yet been paid to it, and that the paucity of MSS. in Europe renders it impossible to do it full justice. I may safely say, however, that it seems to be as faithful a translation as any of the ancient ones; and with regard to age, stands, most probably, at the head of them all. This version has been printed in the Paris and London Polyglotts.

2. The second is a Greek version—Το Σαμαρείτικον—but of this only a few fragments now exist. Whether these fragments are the remnants of a full translation of the Pentateuch, or only a number of scholia translated from the Samaritan version, is a matter of dispute among critics; but there can hardly be a doubt that the Samaritans of Egypt would prepare a translation of their sacred book for the use of their own people, who understood but Greek, just as the Jews did with the whole of the Old Testament. I believe Hottinger* to be right in contending for such a version, and in assigning to it as high an age as that of the Septuagint. Hottinger, Morin, and others have collected these fragments.

* Exer. Ante-Morin. p. 28.

3. There is another version in Arabic, made by Abu Said in Egypt, about the year 1000. It is extant in MS. copies in several European libraries;* but, so far as I know, has not yet been printed, nor fully examined.

* A very beautiful and complete copy was presented to the Bodleian Library, by Dr. Joseph Taylor, in 1663.

CHAPTER XI.

LITERATURE.

SAMARITAN literature, in its palmiest days, could never be compared with that of the Jews, the Samaritans being, comparatively, a small community, and not so much given to literary pursuits. Their singular attachment, however, to the law of Moses would, of itself, draw forth a certain amount of mental activity; and the religious antagonism of the two peoples would still further stimulate the energies of the weaker sect. But independently of these considerations, the Samaritans became open to the influence of Greek literature, especially as developed in Alexandria. Their schools multiplied and flourished, and could boast of their teachers and authors in all the walks of science and literature, as well as theology. But in the persecutions they suffered, during the first centuries of the Christian era, and especially under the licentious and cruel Commodus, most of their books were destroyed. The Mohammedan domination in Palestine and the surrounding countries, only added to the destruction. Nor did they ever regain their former activity. But few authors rose amongst them, and those not of equal abilities to their more ancient sages.

Nearly all the works that have come down to us, with the exception of their liturgies, are of this period. The whole collection, both ancient and modern, is very small, and, probably, not very valuable, with the exception of the MSS. of the law. This, however, cannot be pronounced upon until their contents be carefully and impartially examined. Some time, I fear, will elapse before this can be accomplished, as most of their books are kept with religious jealousy from the hands of the uncircumcised. The priest Amram allowed me on several occasions to look over some of them, which encouraged me to request the favour of his drawing up a list of all those in their possession, with which, to my great satisfaction, he complied. He instructed his nephew Yacub to make it, and in a day or two the document was in my hands. I had requested, that, in every instance, five things should be noted—the name, the author, the language, the date, and the subject; and these were carefully attended to. I shall now subjoin list, in the order in which it was written.

El Amir.—The author of this work was Maraka, who flourished about fifty years before the Christian era. The work consists of an exposition of parts of the sacred law. It is written in Hebrew, with an Arabic translation.

El Kaffi.—This is a work discussing the doctrines contained in the law, written by Juseph el Askari, in the seventh century of the Christian era. The original language is Hebrew, with a kind of free translation into Arabic.

El Tabakh.—A work on the Jews, recounting the judgments that had befallen them; written in Hebrew, with an Arabic translation. The author—Abu Hassan es Suri—flourished in the twelfth century.

Masaeel Checlaffi.—A discussion on the differences between the Jews and Samaritans; written in Hebrew, but accompanied by an Arabic translation. The author was Munadji Naphees ed Déen, who lived in the twelfth century.

El Mulhalal Phi en Nikahi.—An explanation of marriage, describing what is lawful, and what is unlawful. It was written in Hebrew, but is also translated into Arabic. The author—Abul 'l Barakat—lived in the twelfth century.

Kitab el Meerath.—This work is by the same author as the previous one, comprising laws and regulations concerning wills and testaments. It was written in Hebrew, but has an Arabic translation.

Kitab es Sateer.—A compendium of history, from Adam to the time of Moses. No author is named, only that it was written by the command and under the authority of Moses. This is in Hebrew only.

El Chubs.—A work written under the direction of Adam. It is a kind of astronomical work, applied to the regulation of the first month of the year, and an explanation of the sun and moon. This also exists only in Hebrew.

Recsalat.—This is a kind of practical exposition on the former work, written by several authors, but without date. The work is in Hebrew and Arabic.

Recsalat Alhbor Isracel.—An explanation of the feasts, their object and ceremonies. The author was Eleazer the priest, who flourished in the fifth century after the conquest of Palestine. This also is in Hebrew and Arabic.

Recsalat el Arshad.—A work on the days of the month upon which the feasts were to be held. The author—Ibrahim il Ahi—lived during the last century; and wrote his work in Hebrew and Arabic.

Shareehh.—A book explaining certain blessings, was the verbal explanation given to me (the writing could not be deciphered), but, I believe, containing curses upon their adversaries. The author was Ibrahim el Kaisi, who lived in the sixteenth century. The work is in Hebrew and Arabic.

Shareehh.—This is an exposition on the Book of Exodus, by Ghazal ed Duik, who flourished in the thirteenth century. This also is in Hebrew and Arabic.

Shareehh.—An exposition on Genesis, from the beginning to the twenty-eighth chapter. The author is unknown, but dates from the second century. It is in Hebrew and Arabic.

Shareehh.—An exposition on the whole Book of Genesis, written by Musalem el Murjam, in the eighteenth century. This was written in Hebrew with an Arabic translation.

Shareehh.—An exposition on the books of Leviticus and Numbers, by Ghazal el Matari; written in Hebrew, with a kind of paraphrase in Arabic. The author lived in the last century.

Shareehh.—An exposition on the Book of Exodus, by various authors; has no date, but is ancient. It is in Hebrew and Arabic.

Shareehh.—An exposition on the law, how the ancients observed it. It was written by El Hhabr Yacub, in the twelfth century. The work is in Hebrew only.

Ḳitab en Nashi.—This is a work on the birth of Moses, the great lawgiver, by Ishmael Rëihh, who flourished in the sixteenth century. It is written in Hebrew, with an Arabic paraphrase.

Tarteel Salawat, &c.—A compilation of prayers, hymns, &c., by different authors, to be used in the public service. The compiler is unknown, and the book, therefore, has no date. It is all in Hebrew, and has no Arabic translation.

Tarteel.—The service for the Passover compiled from different authors, in Hebrew only. It has no date, but is ancient.

Tarteel.—Another compilation for the same feast, characterized as the former.

Tarteel.—A compilation of prayers to be used during the fifty days following the Passover. The authors of the prayers are unknown, but ancient. The work is only in Hebrew.

Tarteel.—The book of service for the feast of Pentecost, with no date, but ancient; and only in Hebrew.

Tarteel.—Containing the prayers for the first day of the month Tishri, compiled from different authors. It has no date, but ancient; and is only in Hebrew.

Tarteel.—The service for the great fast, the day of

atonement. This is an ancient compilation, in Hebrew only.

Tarteel.—The service for the feast of Tabernacles —characterized as the former, and existing only in Hebrew.

Tarteel.—The service for the last day of the year. This is also an ancient compilation, and only existing in Hebrew.

Tarteel.—The service for the feast of Unleavened Bread—distinguished from the one for Passover. It is an ancient compilation, and in Hebrew only.

Tarteel.—The service for the first day of the year, in Hebrew only; and of ancient date.

Tarteel.—A book containing the service for the two Sabbaths preceding the Passover. This is also of ancient date, and only exists in Hebrew.

Tarteel Col Daffter.—The service for all the common Sabbaths throughout the year, and also for the evening of the first day of every month. This was compiled, arranged, and prescribed by Marka and his associates, who flourished about forty years before the Christian era.

Tareekh.—The history of the children of Israel (Samaritans), their state, and what has happened to them, from their commencement till now.

Such is the list given me by the priest. It may be that it only includes the works mostly esteemed by them. I am led to think so from the fact that the catechism lent me, already referred to, is not entered, and other minor works may have also been omitted. It

is curious to observe, accepting their own dates, that all the liturgical works are ancient: five are dated anterior to the Christian era, two are without date, thirteen since the rise of Moslemism, and two during the first five centuries of the Christian era.

Yacub closed the list with the following addendum:—

These are the books which are existing at present with us in the city of Nablus. The number is thirty-three, and the works consist of histories, expositions, observances and ceremonies of feasts. These are all that I have found, which God (praised be his name!) well knows. This manuscript has been written throughout by the hand of the low, the despised and unworthy Yacub, Ibn Aaron, Ibn Shalmah, Ibn Ghazal Haccohen—may God spare him and forgive him! also his parents, and his teachers! and also those who have bestowed and will bestow favour upon him and upon the whole house of Israel (Samaritans)! Amen!

Written on the 5 of Shaban, 1276 A.H.

CHAPTER XII.

ANTAGONISM OF SAMARITANS AND JEWS.

THE spirit of antagonism between the Samaritans and Jews, which has so deeply characterized their history through all ages, was not commenced at the amalgamation of those nationalities with the remnants of the Ten Tribes, as related in 2 Kings xvii.; but was rather a continuation of what had previously existed for ages. The careful student of the Bible cannot fail to observe that a spirit of rivalry had evinced itself between the tribes of Ephraim and Judah ever since their departure from Egypt. Ephraim, the aristocracy of the nation, however, remained dominant whilst possessing the Ark and Tabernacle, with the whole sacerdotal establishment, within the very centre of its territory, as a rallying point of union to all the tribes. It was not till Judah gave a king to the nation, that the balance of power began to turn in favour of that great rival tribe; and when David had selected Jerusalem for his metropolis, and the temple on Mount Zion had taken the place of the tabernacle, Ephraim could tolerate it no longer. During the reign of King Solomon, cir-

cumstances prevented disunion; but on the death of that monarch, the Ten Tribes, under the influence of Ephraim, separated themselves from the house of David, and formed themselves into a distinct and rival kingdom. The old spirit of rivalry between the two tribes became now more intensified than ever, and spread itself throughout the two kingdoms. Shechem, the chief city of Ephraim, became for a time the metropolis of the new kingdom, and when the seat of government was finally removed to Samaria, it was still within the territory of Ephraim. This gave the tribe a predominance in the councils of Israel. So manifest does this appear through all its subsequent history, that the whole kingdom is frequently called after its name. Thus were Ephraim and Judah completely severed, and the future spirit of the two kingdoms had no tendency to heal the breach, but rather to widen it.

Nor did the Captivity effect a change. On the return from Babylon we find the same deep-seated animosity still existing between Jerusalem and Samaria. The dwellers in Samaria—now a mixed people—seemed to be inclined to unite with the house of Judah, and desired to be allowed to participate in the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, but were refused (Ezra iv. 1–3). It is worthy of notice that they were refused not because they were idolators or of the uncircumcised—no such accusation is preferred against them—but merely, as it seems, on the ground of nationality or tribal sympathy. The event, however, revived all the bad feelings that had previously existed, though

they now arose more from religious than political motives. It was not confined to the inhabitants of these two districts, but whenever the two people came into contact, this sectarian enmity always revealed itself. Even the colonists in Egypt seemed to lack none of the bitterness and violence that existed in the mother country (Joseph., Ant., xiii. 11. 4). And the dictum of the son of Sirach may be, and probably is, a fair index to the traditional hatred in which the Jews generally held the Samaritans, for he, at least, abhorred the foolish people that dwelt in Shechem (Ecclus. l. 26).

In the New Testament we find traces of the same spirit existing, especially among the Jews. The Samaritan woman was surprised at our Saviour asking water of her to drink, because the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans (John iv. 9). The most bitter reproach that the infuriated Jews could hurl at the Saviour was, "Thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil" (John viii. 48). So universal and deep-rooted was this feeling in the Jewish mind that even the disciples of our Lord, on one occasion, when inhospitably treated by the inhabitants of a Samaritan village, thought it not too great a punishment to invoke fire from heaven to consume them (Luke ix. 54). "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of," was the mild and generous rebuke. Indeed the Saviour not only carefully abstained from speaking disparagingly of the Samaritans, but rather represented the Samaritan character in favourable terms. It is true that when He sends forth his disciples on a certain mission, He for certain reasons

forbids their entering into any of the cities of the Samaritans (Matt. x. 5), and elsewhere, according to the general use of the word, calls them strangers (Luke xvii. 18 *); still he depicts the Samaritan character in a more favourable light than that of his own people. Mark his parable of the traveller passing from Jerusalem to Jericho, how the priest and Levite pass their maltreated brother unmindful of his misery, but how the Samaritan has compassion upon him (Luke x. 30–36). And again his miracles upon the ten lepers—nine of whom were Jews. The ten were cleansed, but one only turned back to glorify God; and he fell down at the Saviour's feet, giving him thanks—"and he was a Samaritan" (Luke xvii. 11–19). The Samaritans had, too, a better appreciation of the mission of the Messiah, which probably accounts for the reception given by them to the teaching of Christ. Of Samaritan animosity there is an instance on record which is referred to in the Mishna.† It was the custom of the Jews to communicate to their brethren still in the country of the captivity the exact time of the appearance of the paschal moon by beacon fires lit from Mount Olives to Beth Baltin, upon which every Jew went on the roof of his house waving a torch, until the whole country was ablaze, by

* I am inclined to believe that the Saviour used this expression (ἀλλόγενης), according to the Jews' common designation of the Samaritans, more in way of rebuking the ingratitude of the nine Jews who were cleansed, than of exact ethnological description. Let the reader peruse the whole passage and judge for himself (Luke xvii. 11–19). One thing is certain, that the Saviour did not class the Samaritans with the Gentiles, but made a marked distinction between them (Matt. x. 5).

† Rosh. Hoshanah, Ch. II.

which the right time to celebrate the Passover was made known to the Jews. But for the purpose of misleading them the Samaritans lighted firebrands at wrong times, which led the Jews to ordain that messengers should be sent out. These public outrages, however, were probably done by certain fanatics, and we may suppose that a better spirit presided in the councils of both people. When Josephus tells us of certain Samaritans who entered early into the temple area on the Passover and scattered dead men's bones to defile the sanctuary, he adds that until then Samaritans were admitted on such festivals like the Jews (Ant., xviii. 2. 2). Again, when he speaks of Galilean Jews being maltreated on their way to Jerusalem by the inhabitants of the Samaritan village of Genea (Ant., xx. vi. 1), it is evident that it was an exceptional case; were it otherwise our author, whose hatred of the Samaritan people was most sincere, would most certainly have mentioned it.

The fact that the Galilean Jews passed through the country without frequent quarrellings implies that they were not in great danger from the Samaritans. And if one village showed an inhospitable spirit to Christ and his disciples (Luke ix. 53, 56), other villages received and kindly entertained them (John iv. 40). A full catalogue of the ill-treatment of Jews by Samaritans, so far as it is known to us, is not great; and the bad spirit that existed between them was probably much modified in the more intelligent portion of the community.

The same may, doubtless, be said of the Jews too. It is, indeed, said, on the authority of Rabbi Tanchum,

that the Jews, under the leadership of Ezra and his colleagues, were collected in the temple for the purpose of publicly cursing the Samaritans by the sacred name of God, and by the glorious writing of the tables, and by the curse of the upper and lower house of judgment —that no Israelite eat of anything that is Samaritan— nor that any Samaritan be proselytized to Israel, nor have any part in the resurrection: and that this curse was sent to Israel in Babylonia; and, adding thereto curse upon curse, it was to remain an everlasting curse. The story, however, is very doubtful; for we find, ages after this, that the Jewish authorities conducted themselves very differently. The Mishnic authors have regarded the Samaritan as a brother; nor did the Talmudists all agree in his condemnation—whilst some looked upon him as a heathen, others treated him in every respect as an Israelite. During many ages all kinds of food prepared by the Samaritans were deemed *Cosher:* and no wonder—it was well known that they adhered most scrupulously to the Mosaic law. To eat, therefore, with Samaritans was lawful (compare John iv. 8). And, still more singular, circumcision performed by a Samaritan was held to be valid.

But these concessions did not remove the antipathy of the two peoples: the Jews continued to hate the Samaritans, and the Samaritans were not slow to repay them in the same coin with interest. On the one hand, the Jews accused the Samaritans of worshipping the idols buried under the oak at Shechem (Gen. xxxv. 4); and also of worshipping a dove as a representation of Nergal,

a Cuthean idol (Chulin 6. a), which is still believed among the Jews to this day. The Samaritans, on the other hand, taunt the Jews for not having a regular priesthood, and reproach them with having destroyed the law, with irregular circumcision, with eating food not better than carrion, and with evading the commands of Moses: they are also most prodigal of their curses upon their Cuthite enemies. Time after time was I told by the present priest, who is free from all personal vindictive spirit, that the Jews were accursed since the days of Eli, who was their chief—that it is unlawful to intermarry, or to eat, or to have any unnecessary dealing with them, for they are accursed.

CHAPTER XIII.

SAMARITAN CHRONOLOGY.

IT is well known that the chronology of the Samaritan Pentateuch differs from that of the Jewish and Septuagint texts. It is not my object in this place to discuss the question; but having requested the priest to draw up a chronological table, and this being complied with, I here present the same without note or comment. It is not so full as I hoped it would have been; still it cannot fail, I trust, to be acceptable to those of my readers who take an interest in these matters.

B.C.	
1	This year the world and Adam were created.
2	Cain born.
3	Abel born.
29	The death of Abel.
30	Adam's eyes opened—reflecting upon, and repenting of, what he had done.
130	The birth of Seth—being after the repentance.
135	The birth of Enos.
325	The birth of Cainan.
395	The birth of Mahalaleel.
460	The birth of Jared.
522	The birth of Enoch.
587	The birth of Methuselah.
654	The birth of Lamech.

B.C.

707 The birth of Noah.
887 The removal of Enoch.
930 The death of Adam.
1042 The death of Seth.
1140 The death of Enos.
1227 The birth of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
1230 The death of Cainan.
1290 The death of Mahalaleel.
1307 Death of Jared—Methusaleh—Lamech; the deluge.
1309 The birth of Arphaxad.
1444 The birth of Salah.
1574 The birth of Eber.
1657 The death of Noah.
1708 The birth of Peleg.
1721 Building of the Tower of Babel; and the confusion of tongues.
1722 Beginning of the kingdom of Nimrod.
1747 The death of Arphaxad.
1807 The death of Shem.
1838 The birth of Mary (?).
1877 The death of Salah.
1947 The death of Peleg.
1970 The birth of Sarug.
1978 The birth of Eber.
2077 Removal of Reu to the friend (?).
2100 The birth of Nahur.
2179 The birth of Terah.
2200 The death of Sarug.
2249 The birth of our honoured Lord Abraham—may God grant him peace!
2259 The birth of our Lady Sarah.
2324 The removal of our Lord Abraham to the land of Canaan.
2325 } Commencement of the 430 years of the sojourning
2326 } of the children of Israel and their father Abraham.
2333 The covenant with Abraham.

B.C.

2334 Abraham marries Agar.
2347 Abraham's name changed from Abram to Abraham.
2348 The covenant of circumcision.
2349 The birth of our Lord Isaac, after the removal to Beersheba.
2386 The death of our Lady Sarah.
2389 Marriage of our Lord Isaac to Rebecca.
2391 Marriage of our Lord Abraham to Keturah.
2409 Birth of our Lord Jacob and Esau.
2411 Removal of our Lord Isaac into Gerar; and the covenant made with him.
2424 Removal of our Lord Abraham to the mercy of God—praised be his name!
2486 The flight of our Lord Jacob to his uncle Laban.
2494 The birth of Reuben.
2495 The birth of Simeon.
2496 The birth of Levi—peace be upon him!
2497 The birth of Judah.
2500 The birth of our Lord Joseph—peace be upon him!
2506 Departure of our Lord Jacob from his uncle Laban.
2516 The selling of our Lord Joseph, and his departure to Egypt.
2527 The imprisonment of our Lord Joseph, being accused by his mistress.
2529 The death of our Lord Isaac—peace be upon him!
2530 Our Lord Joseph elevated to the throne of Egypt.
2531 The birth of Manasseh.
2532 The birth of Ephraim.
2539 The going down of our Lord Jacob and children to Egypt.
2548 The birth of Cohath.
2556 The death of our Lord Jacob—removed to the mercy of God—peace be upon him!
2619 The birth of Lord Amram.
2633 The death of Lord Levi.
2671 The birth of Aaron.

B.C.

2673 The birth of Lord and Apostle Moses—peace be upon him!

2681 The death of Cohath.

2753 The departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt.

2755 The death of Lord Amram.

2794 Consecration of Eleazer to the priesthood; and the entrance into the land of Canaan.

2801 The first year of Israel's rule in the land of Canaan.

2802 The birth of Abishua.

2813 In this year Abishua wrote the Holy Book (Pentateuch).

2844 The consecration of Phineas to the priesthood.

2904 The consecration of Abishua, the writer of the Holy Book, to the priesthood.

2944 The consecration of Shishi.

2994 Consecration of Behhaki (Bukki).

3025 Consecration of Uzzi.

3054 The missing of the Tabernacle; and the commencement of the going astray.

3055 The consecration of Shishi II.

3094 The consecration of Behhaki II.

3117 The consecration of Shasbat.

3145 The consecration of Shalom.

3170 The consecration of Hezekiah.

3187 The consecration of Yeholatan.

3218 The consecration of Eyar.

3240 The consecration of Zedekiah.

3268 The consecration of Ahhbad.

3288 The consecration of Mahher.

3309 The consecration of Usadik.

3391 The commencement of the kingdom of David, son of Jesse.

3423 The commencement of the kingdom of Solomon, son of David.

3488 Commencement of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezer.

B.C.	A.D.	
3877		The end of the kingdom of Nebuchadnezer.
4100		The founding of Alexandria.
4105		The death of Alexander.
4110		The Greek rule after Alexander.
4438	1	The beginning of the Christian era.
4508	70	The capture of Jerusalem from the hands of the Jews.
4761	323	The building of Constantinople.
5046	603	The consecration of Eleazer.
5047	609	The rising of the cursed one (Mohammed).
5062	624	The flight of the cursed one.
5070	632	The consecration of Nathaneel.
5071	633	The era of Yazardjan, the Persian.
5089	651	The consecration of Eleazer.
5106	668	The consecration of Ahkboon.
5135	697	The consecration of Eleazer.
5148	710	The conquest of Shalmanezer over the land of Israel.
5150	712	The consecration of Abkoon.
5170	732	The consecration of Simon.
5186	748	The consecration of Levi.
5216	778	The consecration of Phineas.
5227	789	The consecration of Nathaneel.
5229	791	The consecration of Baba.
5240	802	The consecration of Eleazer.
5249	811	The consecration of Nathaneel.
5268	830	The consecration of Eleazer.
5275	837	The consecration of Phineas.
5283	845	The consecration of Nathaneel.
5505	1067	The capture of Jerusalem by the Mohammedans.
5706	1268	The consecration of Yahhzi.
5746	1308	The consecration of Phineas. This was the father of Abishua, the great poet.
5815	1377	The capture of Constantinople by Sultan Mahmud.

B.C.	A.D.	
5820	1382	Discovery of gunpowder.
5881	1443	Discovery of the art of printing.
5927	1489	Discovery of America.
5951	1517	The conquest of Egypt by the Mohammedans.
6062	1624	The end of the priesthood by the house of Phineas.
6063	1625	Commencement of the consecration of Levites—Zadock.
6076	1638	Rule of the Turks over the land of Babylon.
6089	1651	Consecration of Israel the Levite.
6133	1695	The consecration of Abraham the Levite.
6156	1718	Capture of Jerusalem by the Arabs.
6170	1732	Birth of Ghazal Hakkoen, the writer's grandfather.
6172	1734	The consecration of Levi.
6191	1753	The consecration of the writer's grandfather.
6221	1783	The birth of Shalmah Hakkoen, the writer's grandfather.
6225	1787	Death of the writer's grandfather, Ghazal—God have mercy upon him!
6238	1800	The consecration of Shalmah, the writer's grandfather.
6241	1803	Conquest of the Wahabi over the Mohammedans.
6242	1804	The French in Africa.
6247	1809	The birth of our uncle Amram, Hakkoen.
6265	1827	The consecration of our uncle Amram.
6277	1839	Abdul Medjid, Sultan.
6279	1841	The birth of the writer, the humble Yacub, Hakkoen.
6295	1857	The death of the writer's grandfather, Shalmah ibn Ghazal—may God have mercy upon him!

Woodfall and Kinder, Printers, Milford Lane, Strand, London, W.C.


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Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 05 October, 2018